United Nations A/61/PV.80

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

80th plenary meeting
Friday, 15 December 2006, 5.40 p.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 5.40 p.m.

Agenda item 69 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Draft resolution (A/61/L.45)

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Draft resolutions (A/61/L.42, A/61/L.44 and A/61/L.46)

(d) Assistance to the Palestinian people

Draft resolution (A/61/L.47)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly, at its 79th plenary meeting, held on 14 December 2006, adopted draft resolutions A/61/L.42; A/61/L.44; A/61/L.45, as orally corrected; A/61/L.46 and A/61/L.47, as orally corrected. We shall now hear speakers in explanation of vote or position on the resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

Mr. Cohen (Israel): In past years, and for many years now, Israel has voted in favour of draft resolutions like draft resolution A/61/L.47. Israel supports the principle of assistance to the Palestinian people and implements it on the ground. What Israel cannot support is this year's General Assembly resolution, which ignores major political changes in the region.

Hamas, a terrorist organization whose main goal is the absolute destruction of the State of Israel, heads the Palestinian Authority Government. Hamas has repeated refused to embrace the three conditions of the international community: to recognize Israel, renounce violence and terror, and abide by previous agreements. These basic conditions must be reflected in a draft resolution, and they were not in draft resolution A/61/L.47. Hence, we were forced to alter our voting practice and abstain on that proposed text.

A hungry neighbour is not a good neighbour. It is in Israel's interest to see Palestinian society prosper. Israel is always working on the ground, even while under terror attack, to provide tangible assistance to and cooperate with the Palestinians for their benefit. True, terrorism often makes this extremely difficult. Terrorists target crossing points used as passageways for people and goods, which forces temporary closures and other security measures.

But Israel recognizes the needs of its neighbours and maintains its assistance to the Palestinian people. Let me describe what Israel is doing to bring tangible relief to the Palestinians on the ground. Here is just one example. During the last two weeks of November, over 2,000 transports went into the Gaza Strip from Israel, carrying basic food and medical supplies. At the same time, more than 500 transports left the Gaza Strip; these included goods and agriculture for export. Twelve thousand Palestinian merchants and 17,500 day labourers were allowed into Israel from the West Bank to earn their living. From June to October of this year,

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17,135 transports of goods and food supplies passed into Gaza through the Karni crossing from Israel. Over 106,720 back-to-back truck transfers also occurred.

Israel is working closely with the international community through various organizations to ensure continued assistance. Humanitarian convoys organized by Israel, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies enter Gaza from Israel to provide real assistance that goes directly to Palestinians in need of it and not to the system run by the terrorists.

Let me conclude by recalling again what the Secretary-General told the Security Council in his final report on the Middle East two days ago, on 12 December:

> "Some may feel satisfaction at repeatedly passing General Assembly resolutions or holding conferences that condemn Israel's behaviour. But one should also ask whether such steps bring any tangible relief or benefit to the Palestinians." (*S/PV.5584, p. 4*)

Ms. Cullen (Australia): Australia voted in favour of draft resolution A/61/L.47 in recognition of our strong support for the continuing international assistance to the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people. Australia is committed to improving the prospects of development for the Palestinian people and to alleviating poverty and hardship. For its part, for 2006-2007, Australia has allocated $A16.2 million, in humanitarian and development aid to the Palestinian people, to be provided through United Nations agencies and appropriate non-governmental organizations.

Australia is committed to a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Middle East conflict through a negotiated settlement between Israel and Palestinian representatives. Australia supports a two-State solution that recognizes the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and Israel's right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders.

Consistent with this approach, Australia is disappointed that it was not possible to include in this resolution a clear call for Hamas to accept the Quartet principles. While the text welcomes the role of the temporary international mechanism, it would seem reasonable and correct to acknowledge that the temporary international mechanism is a direct result of the refusal by Hamas to accept the clear, unequivocal terms set by the Quartet and the international community for international support, namely, that it, as a Palestinian Government, renounce violence, recognize Israel and accept previous agreements negotiated by Palestinian representatives.

Australia, together with the rest of the international community, has always stood ready to support the peace process. We strongly urge both Israelis and Palestinians to work together and, with the support of the international community, to bring about a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): Throughout the negotiations on draft resolution A/61/L.45 adopted yesterday, which deals with the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, my delegation advocated the inclusion of an explicit reference to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel as well as to its Optional Protocol. The Protocol, adopted by consensus about a year ago, expands the scope of application of the Convention, and, taken together, these two instruments constitute the legal regime for the protection of United Nations personnel. We therefore fail to see any justification for the deletion of the reference to the Optional Protocol from the resolution, even more so since the only provision in question is favourable to host States.

Combating impunity is one of the most effective tools to prevent violence against humanitarian personnel and to increase the safety and security of relief workers in the field. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court criminalizes attacks against personnel involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as long as they are entitled to the protection given to civilians under the international law of armed conflict.

Nevertheless, this year's resolution takes a step backward by merely noting the work of the International Criminal Court, and not even acknowledging the Court's significance to the subject at hand.

We have also stressed, along with others, the need to reflect the fact that national and local aid workers are more often targeted by violence than are international personnel. This has been made clear by the most recent studies mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General. Unfortunately, a specific mention of this fact was not possible either. Here again, striving

for consensus has led to a text which insufficiently reflects the realities it purports to address.

We have joined consensus on this text because the safety and security of humanitarian personnel is a topic of utmost importance for both the United Nations and the millions of people suffering from humanitarian emergencies. While we value the importance of consensus, especially on a topic like the one at hand, we also believe that the principle of consensus can be reconciled with a text that does justice to the subject matter. We look forward to signing on to a text on this issue next year which fulfils both these criteria.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): I wish briefly to explain New Zealand's position on draft resolution A/61/L.45, "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel", which was adopted yesterday by consensus.

New Zealand continues to be a strong supporter of this resolution, and we therefore fully supported its adoption yesterday. We regret, however, that we were unable to co-sponsor this year. In one important respect, the resolution fell short of our expectations. The security and protection of the dedicated personnel who undertake peacekeeping, humanitarian and development activities for the United Nations around the world is a fundamental concern of all Member States.

New Zealand was very pleased in December last year with the adoption by consensus of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. We consider that this was a significant achievement. As the Ambassador of Liechtenstein has noted, the Optional Protocol provides for a substantial extension in the scope of legal protection for United Nations and associated personnel. We believe, therefore, that it was necessary properly to reflect the Optional Protocol in this year's resolution, given Member States' support for it.

There were extensive efforts made by a number of delegations to find an acceptable means to refer to the Optional Protocol. It was disappointing to New Zealand, therefore, that consensus was blocked, as many delegations had shown flexibility. We look forward to the opportunity next year to work with Member States to ensure that proper references to both the Convention and the Optional Protocol are incorporated into the draft resolution.

Mr. Ustinov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation would like to make a short statement in explanation of vote after the voting to set forth our understanding of the term "gender-based violence", which is referred in the draft resolution that was adopted yesterday, contained in document A/61/L.46, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations".

We view the issue of gender-based violence strictly in the context of violence against women. In that connection, I should like to point out that the definition proposed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in its report A/61/85 and supported by a number of delegations contradicts the provisions contained in other United Nations documents, including documents of the Third Committee, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Russian delegation has consistently advocated, and continues to advocate and support, inter alia in the context of the implementation of resolution A/61/L.46, that there be a single definition in international legal documents of the concepts of sexual violence and gender-based violence. Thus the elaboration by OCHA of a new perspective on this issue, without the appropriate intergovernmental agreement, is unacceptable to us. Accordingly, we do not consider the recommendations contained in the report to be legally binding.

Mr. Gruetter (Switzerland): Switzerland would like to align itself with the explanation of vote made by the Principality of Liechtenstein on the resolution on safety and security of humanitarian personnel.

We regret that the final text of the resolution fails properly to reflect the importance of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. That Convention, together with its Optional Protocol, constitute the legal regime for the protection of United Nations personnel. They should therefore be treated as a package. Regrettably, this year's resolution does not take that into account.

Mr. Mottaghi-Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): We voted in favour of draft resolution A/61/L.47 and of the draft resolutions contained in documents A/61/407 and A/61/408, under agenda items 31 and 32, respectively, on the United Nations Relief and Works

Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

By voting in favour of those resolutions, we have made clear that we share the international community's concern at the Palestinian people's pain and suffering caused by the occupying Power, the Israeli regime. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that a durable peace in Palestine will be possible only through justice, an end to discrimination, an end to the occupation of all Palestinian territories, the return of all Palestinian refugees, resort to democratic means to determine the wishes of the people, and the establishment of a democratic Palestinian State, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

I request that this explanation of vote be reflected in the records of this meeting.

Ms. Hulan (Canada): I take the floor this evening in explanation of Canada's vote on draft resolution A/61/L.47, "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

Canada remains deeply committed to supporting the Palestinian people and will continue to respond to their humanitarian needs, namely through our contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and to other United Nations agencies. Those needs have been amplified by the dramatic worsening of the security and humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories. Canada therefore continues to support this resolution.

Canada makes an important distinction between assistance to the Palestinian Authority and assistance to the Palestinian people. We are concerned by the fact that this resolution does not include an explicit reference to the Quartet principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Road Map for peace. A clear commitment by the Palestinian Government to those principles is essential.

Nevertheless, working with our partners and through the United Nations, its agencies and other organizations, Canada will continue to support and respond to the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote or position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (a) and (d) of agenda item 69?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 69.

Agenda item 105 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(a) Election of seven members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General (A/61/227/Add.1)

The President: Pursuant to General Assembly decision 42/450 of 17 December 1987, and upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly elects the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Members will recall that, at its 54th plenary meeting, held on 16 November 2006, the General Assembly elected the Comoros, Haiti, the Russian Federation, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Zimbabwe as members of the Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2007. Members will also recall that there remained two vacancies to be filled, from among the Western European and other States.

In that connection, the Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/61/227/Add.1. As indicated in that document, the Economic and Social Council has nominated France to fill one of the two remaining vacancies from among the Western European and other States for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2007.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, all elections should be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with secret ballots for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be

filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on the basis of dispensing with the secret ballot?

It was so decided.

The President: May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare France elected a member of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2007?

It was so decided.

The President: I congratulate France on its election as a member of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Regarding the remaining vacancy from among the Western European and other States, the General Assembly will be in a position to act on it upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council of a Member State from that region.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 105.

Agenda item 106 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(f) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences

The President: Members will recall that, at its 54th plenary meeting, on 16 November 2006, the General Assembly took note of the appointment by its President of Germany, Grenada, Honduras, Nigeria, Senegal and the Syrian Arab Republic as members of the Committee on Conferences for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2007. Members will further recall that there remained one seat to be filled, from among the Eastern European States.

After consultations with the Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States, I have appointed Belarus as a member of the Committee on Conferences for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2007. May I take it that the Assembly takes note of that appointment?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 106.

(g) Appointment of the members of the Consultative Committee of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

The President: The term of office of the present five members of the Consultative Committee of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, appointed under General Assembly decision 58/416 of 17 December 2003, expires on 31 December 2006.

Following consultations, I have appointed Estonia, Jordan, Mexico, Norway and the Sudan as members of the Consultative Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2007.

May I consider that the General Assembly takes note of these appointments?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 106.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

United Nations A/61/PV.81

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

81st plenary meeting
Tuesday, 19 December 2006, 3.15 p.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Reports of the Third Committee

The President: The General Assembly will consider the reports of the Third Committee on agenda items 41, 60, 61, 63 to 68, 98, 99, 110 and 118.

I request Ms. Elena Molaroni of San Marino, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, to introduce, in one intervention, the reports of the Third Committee.

Ms. Molaroni (San Marino), Rapporteur of the Third Committee: I have the great honour to present for consideration the following reports of the Third Committee on the agenda items allocated to it by the General Assembly.

Under agenda item 41, entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions", the Third Committee recommends in paragraph 21 of its report (A/61/436) the adoption of four draft resolutions.

Under agenda item 60, entitled "Social development", including sub-items (a) to (d), the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 22 of document A/61/437, the adoption of three draft resolutions. I should like to make two small corrections to that document. In paragraph 6, Monaco should be listed among the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.4, entitled "United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all"; and, in paragraph 18, Slovenia should be included among the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.6, entitled "Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing".

Under agenda item 61, entitled "Advancement of women", including sub-items (a) and (b), the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 27 of document A/61/438, the adoption of three draft resolutions. In paragraph 28 of the same document, the Third Committee recommends the adoption a draft decision. I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to a correction to paragraph 3 of that report. Document A/C.3/61/4, which contains a letter dated 11 October 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan addressed to the Secretary-General, should have been included in the list of documents for consideration under agenda item 61.

Under agenda item 63, entitled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children", including sub-items (a) and (b), the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 20 of document A/61/439, the adoption of one draft resolution. In paragraph 21 of the same document, the Third Committee recommends the adoption a draft decision.

Under agenda item 64, entitled "Indigenous issues", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 7 of document A/61/440, the adoption of one draft decision. I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to a correction to paragraph 3 (a) of that report. In that regard, paragraph 3 (a) should read as follows: "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the status of the United

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Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations (A/61/376)".

Under agenda item 65, entitled "Elimination of racism and racial discrimination", including sub-items (a) and (b), the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 23 of document A/61/441, the adoption of three draft resolutions.

Under agenda item 66, entitled "Right of peoples to self-determination", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 21 of document A/61/442, the adoption of three draft resolutions. In paragraph 22 of the same document, the Third Committee recommends the adoption of one draft decision.

Under agenda item 67, entitled "Promotion and protection of human rights", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 5 of document A/61/443, the adoption of one draft decision.

Under sub-item (a) of agenda item 67, entitled "Implementation of human rights instruments", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 10 of document A/61/443/Add.1, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item (b) of agenda item 67, entitled "Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 123 of document A/61/443/Add.2, the adoption of 20 draft resolutions. I would like to make two corrections to that document. In paragraph 25, which deals with draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.19, entitled "Missing persons", Liechtenstein should be added to the list of sponsors. In paragraph 74, which deals with draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.29/Rev.1, entitled "Protection of migrants", Tajikistan and Uruguay should be added to the list of sponsors.

Under sub-item (c) of agenda item 67, entitled "Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 70 of document A/61/443/Add.3, the adoption of four draft resolutions. With regard to draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.41, Bulgaria should be listed as a sponsor.

No proposals were submitted in connection with sub-item (d) of agenda item 67, entitled "Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action".

Under agenda item 68, entitled "Report of the Human Rights Council", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 28 of document A/61/448, the adoption of two draft resolutions. In paragraph 29 of the same document, the Committee recommends, the adoption of one draft decision. In addition, two corrigenda have been issued in connection with document A/61/448: corrigendum 1, which has been issued only in Arabic, and corrigendum 2, which has been issued in connection with the English text.

Under agenda item 98, entitled "Crime prevention and criminal justice", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 25 of document A/61/444, the adoption of four draft resolutions. In paragraph 26 of the same document, the Committee recommends the adoption of one draft decision. I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to a correction to be made to paragraph 3 of that report. Document A/61/368, which contains a letter dated 18 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, should have been included in the list of documents for consideration under agenda item 98.

Under agenda item 99, entitled "International drug control", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 12 of document A/61/445, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 110, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 5 of document A/61/446, the adoption of one draft decision.

Finally, under agenda item 118, entitled "Programme planning", the Third Committee recommends, in paragraph 6 of document A/61/447, the adoption of one draft decision.

Before I conclude, I should like to thank my fellow members of the Bureau of the Third Committee for their support and help in ensuring the successful completion of the work of the Committee. Having said that, I respectfully commend the reports of the Third Committee to the General Assembly for its consideration.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Third Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Third Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee".

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Third Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Third Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise in advance. That means that, where separate or recorded votes were taken, we will do the same. I should also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Third Committee.

I remind the Assembly that we will shortly be taking action on draft resolutions recommended for adoption by the Third Committee. As such, those draft resolutions can no longer be additionally sponsored in plenary meeting by Member States. Any corrections that delegations may have concerning the reports of the Third Committee, including the listing of sponsors of draft resolutions contained in the Committee's reports, should be submitted to the Secretary of the Third Committee for the issuance of corrigenda.

Before we proceed further, I would like to draw the attention of members to a note distributed desk to desk by the secretariat. That note will serve as a reference guide for action on draft resolutions and decisions recommended by the Third Committee in its reports. In that connection, members will find, in column 3 of the note, the numbers of the draft resolutions or decisions on which action is to be taken in plenary meeting, with the corresponding Third Committee document numbers of the draft resolutions or decisions in column 4.

Agenda item 41 (*continued*)

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/436)

The President: The Assembly has before it four draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 21 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to IV.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 136).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/137).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "New international humanitarian order". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/138).

The President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "Assistance for refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 61/139).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who wishes to speak in explanation of position following the adoption of the draft resolutions.

Mr. Cabello Guerra (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): With regard to the adoption of resolution 61/137, entitled "Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees", the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would like to reaffirm its commitment to the protection of refugees in accordance with the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to the Convention on that subject, of which we have been a party since 2 July 1986. The Government of Venezuela would also like to reaffirm its political will to continue to implement concrete measures to provide ongoing and immediate attention to asylum seekers without any discrimination, as well as to prevent social exclusion and facilitate the integration and participation of refugees in community life, given the massive flows of individuals who have come to Venezuela in the past four years.

Our country is pleased at the return of more than 6 million refugees to their homes since 2002. We are also pleased at the impressive decrease in the number of asylum applications worldwide, as noted in the report (A/61/12) of the High Commissioner.

We also share the concern at the spread of the problem of sexual and gender-based exploitation and violence, as well as the alarming phenomenon of the forcible recruitment of children. In that regard, we commend the Office of the High Commissioner for the efforts made to address those problems, especially its awareness-raising campaigns involving all stakeholders concerned and its work with other organizations and programmes with relevant mandates, such as the World Food Programme and Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, among others. Our country also agrees with some of the conclusions of the Executive Committee.

Our country would also like to express its great concern about the fact that — although the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has acknowledged that repatriation and voluntary return constitute the lasting solution with the most positive impact upon refugees and internally displaced persons throughout the years — the resolution and its predecessors have weakened the obligations and responsibilities of States to address the underlying causes of the phenomenon of refugees and internally displaced persons. That has been made even worse this year by the elimination, in paragraph 6, of reference to the need for political will on the part of Governments so that, in cooperation with UNHCR, the problem of internally displaced persons and refugees could be addressed more effectively. The same applies to paragraph 8. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would like to recall that, in accordance with article 2 of the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, it is the obligation of States parties to cooperate with UNHCR in the exercise of its functions. As established in paragraph 23 of part I of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, such cooperation requires the development of strategies to address the root causes and effects of movements of refugees and other displaced persons.

We would also like to point out that clear violations of human rights — especially those committed in the course of armed conflict — are one of the manifold complex factors that lead to the displacement of people. Given that repatriation and voluntary return provide for the most beneficial and lasting solution, it is difficult for the Office to achieve its objectives without the commitment of States and Governments to address the root causes of the phenomenon so that, once refugees have returned home, they can enjoy a life of dignity free from the dangers that led to their displacement in the first place. The reference in paragraph 9 of the resolution to the catalytic role of UNHCR to mobilize assistance from the international community to address the root causes of the refugee phenomenon has thus been diluted, for it is not balanced by obligations on the part of States concerned and places an undue burden on the international community.

Furthermore, with regard to the phenomenon of mixed migratory flows, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to express its concern at the confused language in paragraph 21 of draft resolution II, concerning mixed migratory flows. The mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is very clearly established in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and in the corresponding 1967 Protocol, so it is surprising that there should continue to be doubts in that regard.

Once again, our country urges that the problem of the forcible displacement of persons be addressed from a perspective that enables us to find the lasting solutions we seek -- solutions that will give displaced persons a real chance to return to their homes in safety and dignity. That is why we must eradicate the causes of this phenomenon, which produce so much suffering

and endanger so many human beings throughout the world.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 41?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 60

Social development

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/437)

The President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 22 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I, II and II.

Draft resolution I is entitled "United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/140).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/141).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/142).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 60?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 61

Advancement of women

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/438)

The President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 27 of its report and one draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 28 of the same report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I, II and III and on the draft decision.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/143).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Trafficking in women and girls". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/144).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/145).

The President: We now turn to the draft decision, entitled "Documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the question of the advancement of women". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda 61?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 63

Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/439)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 20 of its report and a draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 21 of the same report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Rights of the child".

I call on the representative of Uruguay, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Álvarez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I believe that a procedural problem has arisen. Two paragraphs of the draft resolution contained in document A/61/439 are different from those that were adopted in the Third Committee.

In the Committee, draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.16/Rev.1 was adopted, but with different content from the draft resolution that appears in the Committee's report. First, there is an editorial error in operative paragraph 12 (e), which must have occurred when the paragraph was included. The first line of this paragraph differs from that of the corresponding paragraph in the text of draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.16/Rev.1. There is also an error in operative paragraph 17 (a), in which the phrases appear in a different order. That is the responsibility of those who edited the text and could have consequences with regard to the text before us for adoption.

At the same time, we could proceed if there were agreement that the text on which we are taking action is as it appears in document A/C.3/61/L.16/Rev.1: the draft resolution as adopted by the Third Committee.

The President: In the absence of objection, we shall proceed to take action on the draft resolution as it was adopted in Third Committee, that is, as it appears in document A/C.3/61/L.16/Rev.1. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

The draft resolution was adopted by 185 votes to 1 (resolution 61/146).

The President: We turn now to the draft decision entitled "Report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 21 of its report (A/61/439)?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for an explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Ali (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly has just adopted resolution 61/146, on the rights of the child. My delegation voted in favour.

The Syrian Arab Republic is working on the ground, within its legislative and legal frameworks, to defend and strengthen childhood and the rights of the child. My country has acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols. We have no objection whatsoever to the substance of the resolution just adopted, and we appreciate the efforts made by the countries that presented it.

However, we reserve the right to interpret operative paragraphs 8, 10, 11 and 28 of the resolution in the light of our national legislation, because our views on those matters were not taken into account during the informal consultations.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 63?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 64

Indigenous issues

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/440)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The draft decision is entitled "Documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with indigenous issues". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt it?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 64?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 65

Elimination of racism and racial discrimination

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/441)

The President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 23 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I, II and III.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Inadmissibility of certain practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand,

Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Japan, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Cape Verde, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu

Draft resolution I was adopted by 121 votes to 4, with 60 abstentions (resolution 61/147).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/148).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Canada, Marshall Islands, Palau

Draft resolution III was adopted by 179 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions (resolution 61/149).

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Finland, who wishes to make a statement in explanation of vote after the voting.

Mr. Jokinen (Finland): It was our intention to explain our vote before the voting, but, with your indulgence, Madam President, I will do so now.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries Iceland and Liechtenstein members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, align themselves with this declaration.

As a result of developments that have taken place since the Third Committee ended its session, it has become necessary for the European Union to speak in explanation of vote regarding the draft resolution entitled "Global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action".

The European Union attaches the highest importance to combating all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Over the years we have set up a number of institutions and policies to meet this important goal. To mention just one recent example, the year 2007 has been designated by the European Union as the European year for equal opportunities for all — a year devoted to combating all types of discrimination.

The European Union is firmly committed to the implementation of the Declaration and Programme and Action of the Durban World Conference. In accordance with our policies of combating racism and promoting human rights and multilateral, we have made a concrete, realistic and constructive follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. We have repeatedly stressed that, in the light of the gravity of the subject, the follow-up must be agreed by consensus and has to be carried out as a joint effort of the whole international community. Attempts to politicize the issue should be utterly rejected by all those who are genuinely committed to moving forward together on this crucial issue.

Less than three weeks ago, the Third Committee of the General Assembly adopted draft resolution III contained in report A/61/441 on global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, presented by the Russian Federation and South Africa on behalf of the member States of the Group of 77 and the People's Republic of China.

The European Union had a number of serious concerns regarding the proposals put forward in the negotiations. However, we resolved to negotiate in good faith and sought actively to engage all delegations, including the main sponsors, so as to overcome differences and reach a conclusion that could be supported by all delegations and would make a genuine contribution to the comprehensive implementation and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

The European Union was able to vote in favour of the draft resolution, as we have done in previous years, on the basis of the following understanding, which the main sponsors of the draft resolution assured us was the framework within which it would be put to effect.

First, the review of the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action would be conducted in the framework of the General Assembly. Secondly, the review would focus on the implementation of what was agreed at Durban and would not involve any reopening of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Thirdly, any preparatory work done by the Human Rights Council would not entail the creation of new mechanisms. Fourthly, the Human Rights Council would use for that end its relevant existing follow-up mechanisms, especially the intergovernmental working group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Fifthly, the further study of the content and scope of substantive and procedural gaps for combating racism, as identified by the

Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, would be carried out by a group of five experts, who would produce a base document containing concrete recommendations on the means by which such gaps could be bridged, including, but not limited to, the possible drafting of an additional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination or the adoption of new instruments.

It was with profound dismay and surprise that the European Union, having participated in good faith in the negotiations in the General Assembly, learned a few days later of two texts, contained in documents A/HRC/3/L.2 and A/HRC/3/L.3, which had been submitted at the third session of the Human Rights Council by some of the main sponsors of the draft resolution just adopted by the Third Committee, with the support of 174 States Members of the United Nations. These texts completely contradicted both the spirit and the letter of draft resolution III in report A/61/441 and the agreed understanding explained earlier, as well as the consensus reached in Geneva at the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Such a breach of trust casts doubt on the commitment of those States to pursue a consensus approach on this issue.

We note once again that the most effective way forward is one in which all members of the international community can participate equally.

In Geneva, the European Union sought to engage the sponsors of the Human Rights Council draft resolutions in negotiations with the objective of bringing the text into agreement with the draft resolution adopted by the Third Committee. To our deep regret, our efforts met with inexplicable indifference. For obvious reasons, neither text managed to reach anything close to consensus at the Human Rights Council. We were compelled to join other delegations in voting against them.

The European Union would like to draw the attention of delegations to the fact that operative paragraphs 33 and 36 of the present resolution reflect the agreement that was reached among delegations to the Third Committee on the review of the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and on the process through which the framework for combating racism is to be further developed.

It is the understanding of the European Union that this review and this process will take place transparently and by consensus, in accordance with the provisions of operative paragraphs 33 and 36, respectively, of the present resolution. Those paragraphs form the basis on which the European Union was able to vote in favour of the draft resolution in the Third Committee. Any reinterpretation of this understanding is unacceptable.

We call on the sponsors of draft resolution III to take the necessary steps in Geneva to restore the agreed course of action and ensure that the resolution just adopted by the General Assembly is properly implemented so that the Human Rights Council and the Third Committee may continue to work towards the same goal in a cohesive and coherent manner.

As we stated in the beginning of this explanation, the European Union attaches great importance to combating racism in all its forms. We intend to take an active part in the implementation of the present resolution. In doing so, we will firmly resist any effort to exploit this issue for political gain. Let us be clear. The fact that the assurances made to us by some delegations in New York were broken in Geneva is unacceptable. Negotiations cannot prosper in an atmosphere of bad faith. For its part, the European Union will continue to negotiate in good faith. We expect the same from others.

It was on that basis that the European Union was able to vote in favour of draft resolution III, just adopted by the General Assembly.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 65?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 66

Right of peoples to self-determination

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/442)

The President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 21 of its report and a draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 22 of the

same report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I, II and III, and on the draft decision.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/150).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Fiji, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Switzerland, Tonga, Vanuatu

Draft resolution II was adopted by 127 votes to 51, with 7 abstentions (resolution 61/151).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq,

Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Canada, Central African Republic, Nauru, Vanuatu

Draft resolution III was adopted by 176 votes to 5, with 5 abstentions (resolution 61/152).

[Subsequently the delegation of the Central African Republic advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: We turn now to the draft decision entitled, "Report of the Secretary-General on the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 66?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 67 (*continued*)

Promotion and protection of human rights

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/443)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 5 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. The draft decision is entitled "Reports considered by the General Assembly in connection with the promotion and protection of human rights". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 67.

(a) Implementation of human rights instruments

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/443/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 10 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The draft resolution is entitled "Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/153).

The President: May I take it that it is wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 67?

It was so decided.

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/443/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it 20 draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 123 of its report.

In connection with draft resolution VI, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Kelley (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division): I would like to inform members that, in connection with draft resolution VI, entitled "Composition of the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights", under the terms of subparagraph (b) of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide

> "To allow, in the effort to redress the specific geographic imbalance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the establishment of a temporary mechanism whereby recruitment of staff in the Office at the P-2 level would not be restricted to successful candidates from the national competitive examination".

This provision would be significantly at variance with the principle that recruitment at the P-2 level is exclusively through competitive examination, which has been affirmed repeatedly by the General Assembly, including in paragraph 15 of section III B of resolution 51/226, paragraph 17 of section V of resolution 53/221, paragraph 13 of section IV of resolution 55/258 and paragraph 7 of section II of resolution 57/305, which reaffirms the provisions of section IV of resolution 55/258.

As explained in paragraph 16 of the Secretary-General's comments on the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit in its report on the follow-up to the management review of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/61/115/Add.1), matters relating to competitive examination are under the authority of the Office of Human Resources Management, rather than the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Office of Human Resource Management organized, in 2005, a specialized examination in human rights, as a result of which 29 candidates were placed on the roster. Requesting the High Commissioner for Human Rights to take measures to implement the draft resolution would allow the recruitment of candidates for P-2 positions outside the roster, and could therefore prolong the time during which successful candidates would remain on the roster.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Belarus, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Ms. Petkevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus would like to take this opportunity to express its sincere gratitude to those States that voted in the Third Committee in favour of the draft resolution entitled "Promotion of equitable and mutually respectful dialogue on human rights" and to those that voted against the draft resolution entitled "Situation of human rights in Belarus" under agenda item 67 (c).

We believe that the prestige of the United Nations cannot and should not be used as a means of political pressure on sovereign States under the outlandish pretext of human rights violations. That runs counter to the very nature of our Organization. Unfortunately, we note that it is precisely those methods that are being used with regard to the Republic of Belarus.

Confrontation between States and mutual accusations have never been an effective means of resolving important international problems. It is impossible to ensure the implementation of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights by adopting politically motivated resolutions. As is well known, a stick can kill, but it will never cure.

Draft resolution XIII, entitled "Promotion of equitable and mutually respectful dialogue on human rights", takes a fundamentally different approach. The draft resolution encourages respect for the principles of equality and self-determination and the political, economic and cultural diversity of States, and underlines the importance of promoting mutual understanding among civilizations, cultures and religions through dialogue. Such an approach will facilitate the true promotion of human rights in every country.

The Republic of Belarus believes in an equitable and mutually respectful dialogue on human rights

based on an unbiased analysis of objective data on the human rights situation in a particular country.

We firmly believe that the Human Rights Council will become an authoritative body able to ensure constructive cooperation on human rights under the auspices of the United Nations. Draft resolution XIII, entitled "Promotion of equitable and mutually respectful dialogue on human rights", seeks to achieve that important goal. The draft resolution could, in fact, have been submitted under the agenda item on the reform of the United Nations.

We call on members to support draft resolution XIII. Its adoption would lay the foundation for the qualitative renewal of a major area of United Nations activities: the protection and promotion of human rights.

The President: We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to XX, one by one. After all decisions have been taken, representatives will again have the opportunity to explain their votes.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "The human rights situation arising from the recent Israeli military operations in Lebanon". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Vanuatu

Draft resolution I was adopted by 112 votes to 7, with 64 abstentions (resolution 61/154).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Central African Republic advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Nauru had intended to abstain.]

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Missing persons".

I give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan.

Ms. Adjalova (Azerbaijan): My delegation, as a main sponsor of draft resolution II, entitled "Missing persons", would like to point out that for technical reasons one of the final amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.19, which was agreed upon by all

delegations in the course of informal consultations in the Third Committee and appears in the final text of the draft resolution, was not included in the oral amendments made to the text when action was taken on the draft. I will therefore read out that amendment now.

The words "existing laws, practices," in operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution II should be replaced by the words "international and national legal".

This is not a new amendment; it was agreed to in the Third Committee. I am introducing it today because, for technical reasons, it was not included among the final oral amendments that were made when the draft resolution was adopted in the Third Committee. We thank all delegations for their understanding and hope that the amendment will be adopted.

The President: The representative of Azerbaijan has submitted an oral amendment to operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution II.

In accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on the amendment submitted by the representative of Azerbaijan.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the oral amendment to operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution II submitted by the representative of Azerbaijan?

The oral amendment was adopted.

The President: Since the oral amendment to operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution II submitted by the representative of Azerbaijan has been adopted, we shall proceed to take a decision on draft resolution II, as orally amended.

The Third Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution II, as orally amended?

Draft resolution II, as orally amended, was adopted (resolution 61/155).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Brazil, Chile, Singapore

Draft resolution III was adopted by 130 votes to 54, with 3 abstentions (resolution 61/156).

The President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "Human rights and extreme poverty". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 61/157).

The President: Draft resolution V is entitled "Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution V was adopted (resolution 61/158).

The President: Draft resolution VI is entitled "Composition of the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu

Draft resolution VI was adopted by 118 votes to 7, with 55 abstentions (resolution 61/159).

The President: Draft resolution VII is entitled "Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of

Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Mexico, Peru

Draft resolution VII was adopted by 124 votes to 56, with 4 abstentions (resolution 61/160).

The President: Draft resolution VIII is entitled "Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution VIII was adopted (resolution 61/161).

The President: Draft resolution IX is entitled "Respect for the right to universal freedom of travel and the vital importance of family reunification". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution IX was adopted by 122 votes to 4, with 58 abstentions (resolution 61/162).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Brunei Darussalam informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The President: Draft resolution X is entitled "The right to food". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

Draft resolution X was adopted by 185 votes to 1 (resolution 61/163).

The President: Draft resolution XI is entitled "Combating defamation of religions". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Comoros,

Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Armenia, Bolivia, Botswana, Cape Verde, Colombia, Fiji, Haiti, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu

Draft resolution XI was adopted by 111 votes to 54, with 18 abstentions (resolution 61/164).

The President: Draft resolution XII is entitled "Protection of migrants". The Third Committee adopted draft resolution XII without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution XII was adopted (resolution 61/165).

The President: Draft resolution XIII is entitled "Promotion of equitable and mutually respectful dialogue on human rights". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal,

Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Abstaining:

Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Burundi, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Dominica, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu

Draft resolution XIII was adopted by 86 votes to 64, with 26 abstentions (resolution 61/166).

The President: Draft resolution XIV is entitled "Regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XIV was adopted (resolution 61/167).

The President: Draft resolution XV is entitled "Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XV was adopted (resolution 61/168).

The President: Draft resolution XVI is entitled "The right to development". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Draft resolution XVI was adopted by 134 votes to 53 (resolution 61/169).

The President: Draft resolution XVII is entitled "Human rights and unilateral coercive measures". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Draft resolution XVII was adopted by 131 votes to 54 (resolution 61/170).

The President: Draft resolution XVIII is entitled "Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XVIII was adopted (resolution 61/171).

The President: Draft resolution XIX is entitled "Hostage-taking". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution XIX was adopted (resolution 61/172).

The President: Draft resolution XX is entitled "Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions". Separate votes have been requested on operative paragraph 4 and operative paragraph 5 (b).

If there are no objections to those requests, I shall first put to the vote operative paragraph 4. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and

Principe, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Against:

Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, China, Dominica, Egypt, El Salvador, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Belarus, Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Zambia

Operative paragraph 4 was retained by 104 votes to 31, with 29 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of El Salvador advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegations of Brunei Darussalam, Jamaica and the Syrian Arab Republic had intended to vote against; the delegation of Tunisia had intended to abstain.]

The President: I shall now put to the vote operative paragraph 5 (b) of draft resolution XX. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Against:

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, China, Djibouti, Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Burundi, Congo, Dominica, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia

Operative paragraph 5 (b) of draft resolution XX was retained by 105 votes to 30, with 30 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of the United States of America informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Brunei Darussalam had intended to vote against; the delegation of Niger had intended to abstain;

and the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic had intended not to participate in the voting.]

The President: I shall now put to the vote draft resolution XX as a whole, as amended.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Viet Nam, Yemen

Draft resolution XX as a whole, was adopted by 137 votes to none, with 43 abstentions (resolution 61/173).

The President: I now call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for an explanation of vote.

Mr. Elji (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to explain Syria's vote on resolution 61/161 on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief.

The Syrian Arab Republic rejects all forms of extremism and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief, given the long history of tolerance of our people, who have been blessed in receiving the three monotheistic religions. In view of its faith and belief in the need to condemn all forms of discrimination and to promote dialogue to increase mutual respect and understanding, my delegation joined the consensus on the resolution, which emphasizes the need to avoid equating any religion with terrorism and calls on the United Nations to play a pioneering role in addressing extremism.

However, we express our strong reservations concerning operative paragraph 4 (a), which runs counter to the tenets and holy teachings of the Islamic faith.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 67?

It was so decided.

(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/443/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly has before it four draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 70 of its report.

Before proceeding further, I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution II, entitled "Situation of human rights in Myanmar", is postponed to a later date to allow time for the review of its programme budget implications by the Fifth Committee. The Assembly will take action on draft resolution II as soon as the report of the Fifth Committee on its programme budget implications is available.

I now call on the representative of Belarus, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Ms. Petkevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): In the Third Committee, a representative of the United States once rightly noted that there should be substantial reasons to initiate a country-specific draft resolution. There are absolutely no such reasons for the draft resolution entitled "Situation of human rights in Belarus".

Belarus is a party to all universal human rights instruments and participates actively in international cooperation aimed at promoting and protecting human rights in all countries. The Government of Belarus fulfils in good faith its commitments related to the promotion and protection of human rights, as set out in its constitution, in international treaties to which it is a party and in its national legislation.

It is absolutely absurd to raise the issue of human rights abuses in relation to a country with a socially oriented economy — a country whose entire State policy is aimed at the social and legal protection of its people. One should not disregard the concrete and undeniable achievements of Belarus. Our poverty rate has decreased to one fourth of what it was five years ago; it is now the lowest among all countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Our unemployment rate is a mere 1.2 per cent, while the disparity in personal incomes is maintained within socially acceptable limits. Our civil society is constantly developing. In Belarus, there are 17 political parties, with more than 1,000 organizational branches; 37 trade unions, with nearly 23,000 local organizations; and nearly 2,300 civic organizations, with more than 11,000 local branches.

One often hears criticism of Belarus for alleged restrictions on freedom of speech and freedom of the press. But how can there be talk about monopolization and restrictions on the freedom of the mass media when in Belarus the number of independent publications is three times larger than the number of State-owned publications and when the number of foreign mass media publications has grown to more than 6,000? In our country, which is not very large in terms of territory and population, there are 3,090 religious organizations, representing 25 religious faiths and denominations.

All of that shows that in Belarus an effective State system has been established that guarantees the enjoyment of civil, political, social and economic rights by Belarusian citizens and by our guests from other countries. To fail to take that into account when we are considering this draft anti-Belarus resolution is not right.

We have no reason to hide anything from the international community. We reaffirm once again our interest and our readiness to engage in an open, equitable and mutually respectful dialogue with all our international partners in order to find mutually acceptable solutions to existing disagreements.

Belarus cooperates with the human rights treaty bodies and with the thematic special procedures of the Human Rights Council, and we intend to intensify that cooperation. The unfounded accusations that the initiators of the draft resolution entitled "Situation of human rights in Belarus" are attempting to present as an opinion of the world community will only increase mutual misunderstanding and mistrust. We will consider any votes cast in favour of the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus as an unfriendly act of gross and illegitimate interference in the internal affairs of Belarus.

In the General Assembly, we would like to remind the United States of America and the United Kingdom — the sponsors of this draft resolution — about their commitments to the Republic of Belarus, assumed in accordance with the Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with the Republic of Belarus' accession to the Treaty on the

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed in Budapest on 5 December 1994. Paragraph 3 of the Memorandum states:

> "The United States of America, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland reaffirm their commitment to the Republic of Belarus, in accordance with the principles of the CSCE Final Act, to refrain from economic coercion designed to subordinate to their own interest the exercise by the Republic of Belarus of the rights inherent in its sovereignty and thus to secure advantages of any kind."

And what do we have in reality? The United States Congress adopts the so-called "Belarus Democracy Act", which authorizes the allocation of funds for, in effect, changing the constitutional order of a sovereign State. The European Union is considering economic sanctions against Belarus, which would inevitably undermine the standard of living of the Belarussian people — the very people whose rights are supposedly being defended. The United States and the European Union are making an unprecedented effort to push through the United Nations an anti-Belarussian draft resolution with no objective basis.

All of that should serve as a useful lesson to those countries that are being promised political and economic guarantees in exchange for meeting the demands levelled at them. How much are such guarantees worth? Belarus has learned their true cost at first hand.

There can be no universal model of State development designed by any one person. Blueprints are unacceptable in that regard, since the issue is the destiny of an entire nation and the status of a sovereign State — and I emphasize "sovereign".

Belarus consistently and successfully fulfils the recommendations put forward by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Our accomplishments in that respect are perfectly evident. In their desire to move forward, the leaders of Belarus are disoriented when such successes are ignored. It would seem that, regardless of whether or not we make progress, the assessment will always be negative. Progress should be stimulated, not repudiated. We appeal to all States to act on principle and to vote in favour of the no action motion on the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus, or against the draft resolution should it come to a vote.

The President: We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I, III and IV.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Comoros, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Against:

Algeria, Belarus, China, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia,

Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Qatar, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Zambia

Draft resolution I was adopted by 99 votes to 21, with 56 abstentions (resolution 61/174).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Pakistan advised the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Situation of human rights in Belarus".

I call on the representative of the Russian Federation on a point of order.

Mr. Rogachev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Under the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Russian Federation proposes that no action be taken on draft resolution III on the situation of human rights in Belarus. The procedural proposal is based primarily on the lack of a problem as a focus of substantive discussion. It is also based on Russia's principled position aimed at depoliticizing the work of the United Nations human rights system.

We view the draft resolution on the human rights situation in Belarus as an extremely politicized measure dictated by self-serving considerations that are irrelevant to the genuine defence of human rights. Our assessment was borne out by the unacceptable actions in the Security Council by the draft resolution's sponsors, which seek to exploit the rostrum of any United Nations body to exert pressure on sovereign States of which they disapprove.

On that basis, the Russian Federation asks delegations to vote in favour of the no-action motion concerning draft resolution III on the situation of human rights in Belarus.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has moved, within the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure, that no action be taken on draft resolution III. Rule 74 reads as follows:

> "During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. The President may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule."

Two speakers have asked to speak in favour of the motion, and I give them the floor.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to express its support for the no action motion put forward by the Russian Federation concerning draft resolution III.

It has been the Chinese delegation's consistent view that countries should promote human rights through equitable and mutually respectful dialogue. We oppose the practice of submitting country-specific draft resolutions on human rights. We believe that such draft resolutions only exacerbate mistrust and confrontation among countries, and in no way contribute to improving and promoting human rights in various countries.

We therefore support the no action motion proposed by the Russian delegation, and appeal to other delegations to follow suit.

Mr. Amorós Núñez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba wishes in turn to support the motion made by the Russian Federation. We believe that the draft resolution submitted by the United States is not based on a genuine interest in cooperation on human rights issues. In our opinion, it exploits the issue of human rights for political purposes on the basis of selectivity and double standards, as evidenced by the selective treatment of this matter. It runs counter to the new spirit of cooperation that we have allegedly promoted with the establishment of the Human Rights Council and its new mechanisms, such as the universal periodic review. The United States has no right to encourage initiatives like this, which are diametrically opposed to genuine cooperation in relation to human rights.

Cuba therefore reiterates its support for the motion and requests all Member States to vote in its favour.

The President: Two representatives have asked to speak against the motion, and I give them the floor.

Mr. Miller (United States of America): I am pleased to be delivering this statement on behalf of the United States, Andorra, Australia, Canada, Japan, Israel, Liechtenstein and San Marino.

We regret that a procedural no action motion has been requested in the plenary of the General Assembly. We submit that the spirit of this deliberative institution calls for draft resolutions to be considered on their merits. It would be a disservice to our mission as a universal body with responsibility for promoting human rights to prevent open discussions and decisions with procedural motions.

On 22 November, the Third Committee of the General Assembly — the only universal body responsible for human rights issues — debated and soundly adopted the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus by a margin of 39 votes. It also reaffirmed its authority and responsibility to promote and protect human rights, and defeated a similar no action motion initiative.

We urge all Member States to vote against the procedural motion because the use of such a procedural motion in the General Assembly will undermine the work, authority and responsibility of the only — I repeat, only — universal body of the United Nations responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights. A no action motion in the General Assembly after the Committee has recommended the draft resolution to the Assembly for adoption signifies a complete disregard for the Third Committee and its decision-making process.

We therefore strongly urge all Member States to vote against the motion.

Mr. Jokinen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine and Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

There should be no question about the General Assembly's mandate to look into human rights situations in order to promote and encourage respect for human rights, one of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. The General Assembly has adopted resolutions expressing its concern about the worst human rights situations for decades.

The call of a motion now to adjourn debate represents an attempt to prevent the consideration of a draft resolution on procedural grounds. The calling of such a motion aims at denying the States Members of the United Nations their sovereign right to bring before the General Assembly any concern that they themselves deem to merit its attention, and at limiting the agenda of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, the Third Committee has already voted on the same motion and decided not to adopt it. Accordingly, the Third Committee has already considered, on its merits, the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus and deemed it worthy of adoption. A no action motion on the draft resolution in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly is therefore a vote of no confidence in the Third Committee. It undermines that body.

It is an important matter of principle for the European Union to vote against any motion to close the debate on an item under discussion, even more so in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly. The calling of the motion is clearly aimed at preventing the United Nations from dealing with the situation of human rights in Belarus. No country large or small can be regarded as being beyond or above consideration by international human rights forums. That would run counter to the principles of universality and interdependence of all human rights.

The Third Committee of the General Assembly has already addressed the situation of human rights in Belarus, based on the gravity of the situation on the ground. By choosing not to address the situation, we would show callous disregard for the very people whose human rights and fundamental freedoms we have committed ourselves to protecting.

If successful, the motion to adjourn the debate would prevent us from even considering the issues covered in the draft resolution and already adopted by

the Third Committee. That runs contrary not only to the good practice of the General Assembly, but also to the spirit of dialogue to which we are all attached. The General Assembly would undermine its own credibility if it remained silent on grave and widespread violations of human rights in situations where the country concerned refuses to cooperate in any meaningful manner with the United Nations human rights system.

The European Union strongly urges delegations to vote against the motion to adjourn the debate for reasons of principle, regardless of their voting intentions on the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the motion submitted by the representative of the Russian Federation that no action be taken on draft resolution III.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Abstaining:

Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burundi, Cape Verde, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Djibouti, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Uganda

The motion was rejected by 67 votes to 79, with 32 abstentions.

The President: Since the motion for no action was not adopted, the Assembly will proceed to take a decision on draft resolution III. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Palau, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tonga,

Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Against:

Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ecuador, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Zambia

Draft resolution III was adopted by 72 votes to 32, with 69 abstentions (resolution 61/175).

The President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran".

I call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Rezvani (Islamic Republic of Iran): Thank you very much, Madam President, for giving me the floor before the consideration of draft resolution IV, entitled "Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran". I wish to invoke rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and request that no action be taken on that draft resolution. I would also like to briefly bring to the attention of members the following points.

Resolution 61/166, entitled "Promotion of equitable and mutually respectful dialogue on human rights", just adopted by this body, stresses, inter alia, stressed the need to avoid politically motivated and biased country-specific resolutions on the situation of human rights, confrontational approaches, exploitation of human rights for political purposes, selective targeting of individual countries for extraneous considerations and double standards in the work of the United Nations on human rights issues.

Last September, the heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, during their fourteenth Summit, held in Havana, emphasized that the exploitation of human rights for political purposes, including the selective targeting of individual countries for extraneous considerations, which is contrary to the founding principles of the Movement and the United Nations Charter, should be prohibited. Furthermore, it should be noted that the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the African Union have adopted virtually the same position.

In view of the explicit and widespread support for opposing country-specific resolutions, I wish, as I said, to invoke rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. By voting in favour of this no-action motion, delegations would remove a serious obstacle to dialogue and would enable all of us, including my delegation, to cooperate further to promote and protect human rights, rather than insisting on the adoption of country-specific draft resolutions.

The President: The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran has moved, within the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure, that no action be taken on draft resolution IV. Rule 74 reads as follows.

> "During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote."

Two speakers have asked to speak in favour of the motion, and I give them the floor.

Mr. Hayee (Pakistan): The Pakistan delegation supports the motion introduced by the delegation of Iran that no action be taken on draft resolution IV, entitled "Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran". The Pakistan delegation requests all delegations to support the motion.

Mr. Kitchen (Zimbabwe): My delegation supports the proposal by the Islamic Republic of Iran that no action be taken on draft resolution IV. We believe that such draft resolutions are a departure from the approach to human rights that was agreed in resolution 60/251. We therefore urge all Member States to support the motion.

The President: Two speakers have asked to speak against the motion, and I give them the floor.

Mr. McNee (Canada): I am pleased to speak today on behalf of Canada, Australia, Liechtenstein, Norway, the United States, San Marino and Andorra. We very much regret that a no-action motion has been introduced in the plenary of the General Assembly. That is an extraordinary initiative to stifle debate and to undermine the jurisdiction and the responsibilities of the Assembly.

On 21 November 2006, the Third Committee adopted the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Iran by a very clear margin after a no-action motion had been introduced and had failed. Let me repeat: this draft resolution was adopted in the Third Committee after a similar no-action motion had been rejected. The draft resolution was then recommended by the Third Committee to the General Assembly for its consideration today.

As I said at the time in the Third Committee, any country-specific draft resolution in the field of human rights should be considered on its individual merits, but preventing debate on certain country situations would presume that certain countries are beyond or above consideration by international human rights forums.

It is for that reason that we are firmly opposed to procedural motions whose primary purpose is to stifle debate on situations of serious human rights concern. Indeed, I should like to recall that it is for that reason that Canada, as a matter of principle, did not bring forward a no-action motion in the Third Committee on the draft resolution proposed by Iran on the situation of indigenous people and immigrants in Canada, despite our firm belief that that draft resolution did not stand up to scrutiny on its merits.

The use of a procedural device in the General Assembly is even more egregious, however. A no-action motion in the Assembly after the same no-action motion has been attempted and has failed in Committee, and after the Committee has recommended the draft resolution to the Assembly for adoption, undermines the Third Committee and is dismissive of its decision-making. Such a motion seeks to prevent the General Assembly from acting upon the recommendation of the Third Committee. That would have the effect of undermining the work of the Third Committee, the only United Nations body responsible for human rights with universal membership, as well as undermining the work of the General Assembly itself. We therefore strongly urge all Member States to vote against this motion.

Mr. Jokinen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, and the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, align themselves with this declaration.

The European Union regrets that it is necessary for us once again to take the floor in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly against a motion of no action.

There should be no question about the General Assembly's mandate to look into human rights situations in order to promote and encourage respect for human rights, one of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. The General Assembly has passed resolutions expressing its concern about the worst human rights situations for decades.

The call of a motion now to adjourn debate represents an attempt to prevent the consideration of a draft resolution on procedural grounds. The calling of such a motion aims at denying the States Members of the United Nations their sovereign right to bring before the General Assembly any concern that they themselves deem to merit its attention, and at limiting the agenda of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, the Third Committee has already voted upon the same motion and decided not to adopt it. Accordingly, the Third Committee has already considered, on its merits, the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and deemed it worthy of adoption. A no action motion on the draft resolution in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly is therefore a vote of no confidence in the Third Committee. It undermines that body.

It is an important matter of principle for the European Union to vote against any motion to close the debate on an item under discussion, even more so in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly. The calling of the motion is clearly aimed at preventing the United Nations from dealing with the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. No country large or small can be regarded as being beyond or above consideration by international human rights forums. That would run counter to the principles of universality and interdependence of all human rights.

The Third Committee of the General Assembly has already addressed the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran based on the gravity of the situation on the ground. By choosing not to address the situation, we would show callous disregard for the very people whose human rights and fundamental freedoms we have committed ourselves to protecting.

If successful, the motion to adjourn the debate would prevent us from even considering the issues covered in the draft resolution and already adopted by the Third Committee. That runs contrary not only to the good practice of the General Assembly but also to the spirit of dialogue to which we are all attached. The General Assembly would undermine its own credibility if it remained silent on grave and widespread violations of human rights in situations where the country concerned refuses to cooperate in any meaningful manner with the United Nations human rights system.

The European Union strongly urges delegations to vote against the motion to adjourn the debate for reasons of principle, regardless of their voting intentions on the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the motion submitted by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran that no action be taken on draft resolution IV.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, China, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Abstaining:

Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guyana, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda

The motion was rejected by 75 votes to 81, with 24 abstentions.

The President: Since the motion for no action was not adopted, the Assembly will proceed to take a decision on draft resolution IV. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Palau, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Vanuatu

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, China, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zambia

Draft resolution IV was adopted by 72 votes to 50, with 55 abstentions (resolution 61/176).

The President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Shinyo (Japan): As my delegation has already made a statement on the adoption of the resolution on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the Third Committee, we will not repeat what was said.

I should like first, however, of course to say "thank you very much" to all countries that supported the resolution. This time, so many countries — nearly 100 — voted in favour of the resolution, and we appreciate that very much. It is a sign of the resolve of the majority of the General Assembly to support the resolution.

We should like, however, to state that Japan strongly urges that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea take seriously the fact that the General Assembly has adopted the resolution. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should fully cooperate with the United Nations system, including with Special Rapporteur Vitit Muntarbhorn. In particular, we strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond honestly to inquiries into the abductions matter, admit that its actions violated human rights, allow the abducted survivors to return to

Japan or other countries of origin without delay, and, finally, immediately conduct a thorough investigation and surrender the perpetrators who were responsible for the abductions.

Ms. Lintonen (Finland): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Tuvalu, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ukraine, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Venezuela.

The right of everyone to life was universally affirmed in article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reaffirmed in other international instruments, such as article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and articles 6 and 37 (a) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Over the past decade, the Commission on Human Rights adopted in all consecutive sessions a resolution on the question of the death penalty, expressing deep concern at its continuing use around the world and calling upon States that still maintain the death penalty to abolish it completely and, in the meantime, to establish a moratorium on executions.

We firmly believe that the abolition of the death penalty contributes to the enhancement of human dignity and the progressive development of human rights. The death penalty provides no added value in terms of deterrence. Any miscarriage or failure of justice is irreversible when, in a cruel and inhumane way, the punishment deprives one of his or her right to life. The signatories of this statement are pleased to note that the trend towards the worldwide abolition of the death penalty continues, and they welcome the abolition of capital punishment in three States over the past year, together with positive developments towards its complete abolition in many other countries.

However, despite these developments, there is still cause for great alarm. The signatories of this statement remain deeply concerned about the resort to the death penalty all over the world.

The signatories of this statement commit themselves to working towards the abolition of the death penalty and, where the death penalty still exists, call for its use to be progressively restricted, insist that it be carried out according to minimum standards such as those set out in Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/50, and, in the meantime, call for the establishment of a moratorium on executions.

The signatories call upon the General Assembly to be seized of this matter in the future.

Mr. Cheok (Singapore): It is indeed unfortunate that we once again find ourselves exchanging words on the death penalty at this very strange point in time. We had almost made it through the main part of this session of the General Assembly without resorting to such a repetitive exchange. But it seems that old habits die hard. Some delegations have consistently tried to portray this as a human rights issue. They claim that this is a matter of cruelty and inhumane treatment. They have repeatedly tried to impose upon all Member States their views on the death penalty.

The reality is that there is no international consensus on whether the death penalty is a violation of human rights. We do not think that it is. Indeed, a large group of countries have always dissociated themselves from resolutions on the abolition of the death penalty. For a large number of countries, the death penalty is a criminal justice issue. It is imposed for the most serious crimes and serves as a deterrent to would-be offenders. Every citizen also has a right to live in a safe environment, free from criminal threat to their lives and personal safety.

Singapore's position is very simple. Every country has the sovereign right to decide on its own criminal justice system. Whether to maintain or to abolish the death penalty is a question of national choice. Each society has to judge what is best for its people, according to its unique circumstances. Respect for human rights must include respect for differences in systems and practices. Tolerance of diversity cannot

be restricted only to positions with which one agrees. In the absence of international consensus, countries on either side of the argument have no right to impose their opinions. Opinions are not self-evident truths that brook no dissent. A little modesty would go a long way towards promoting genuine dialogue — assuming, of course, that there is a desire for genuine dialogue.

My delegation respects the right of others to decide on their own systems. If this means the abolition of the death penalty in their respective societies, then we respect that decision. We do not seek to impose our views. All we ask is that the same treatment — the same basic courtesy — be extended to us.

Mr. Suárez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia, a country that has suffered from the scourge of kidnapping but that has decisively confronted the actions of the criminal groups responsible for those terrible crimes in our country, thereby considerably reducing the number of kidnappings, would like to express its solidarity with the victims of kidnapping and their families in all nations. We call on all States to take actions and decisions to effectively deal with that reprehensible crime and demand the unconditional release of all those have been kidnapped, regardless of the nature or the claimed motives of those responsible.

Mr. Khammanichanh (Lao People's Democratic Republic): My delegation would like to explain its vote on resolution 61/174, entitled "Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea".

States Members of the United Nations that are party to international conventions on human rights have been consistently meeting their obligations. My delegation is of the view that the promotion of human rights should be addressed on the basis of each country's specific reality and historical evolution. Regrettably, however, the contents of the resolution are not in line with those principles. Our delegation therefore voted against the resolution.

We understand the concerns of the international community regarding the issue of abduction and express our sympathy to the victims of such acts. My delegation hopes that whenever they occur, they will be resolved in a constructive and peaceful manner.

Mr. Pekarchuk (Ukraine): Upon instructions from my capital, I am to deliver the following statement in explanation of vote on draft resolution III.

The delegation of Ukraine supported draft resolution III, entitled "Situation of human rights in Belarus". Ukraine is interested in the democratic development of the Republic of Belarus on the basis of respect for human rights and the rule of law. We consider actions that could isolate the Republic of Belarus — an important neighbour — to have a counterproductive effect. Ukraine supports the establishment of an effective dialogue and cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and international human rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, as well as the human rights treaty bodies.

Mr. Outlule (Botswana): My delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution I, "Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea".

Although the delegation of Botswana abstained in the voting on the draft resolution, we would like to place it on record that, had paragraph 1 (b) (v) been put to the vote, we would have voted in favour of it. In paragraph 1 (b) (v), the General Assembly expresses its very serious concern at

> "Unresolved questions of international concern relating to the abduction of foreigners in the form of enforced disappearance, which violates the human rights of the nationals of other sovereign countries".

We wish to place on record that this is a matter that we consider to be very serious and that it needs to be addressed immediately. Thus, we would have voted in favour of paragraph 1 (b) (v) had it been put to a vote.

Mr. Sin Song Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): It was not the intention of my delegation to take the floor at this stage, but, owing to the lack of factual content in the statement made by the delegation of Japan, my delegation is obliged to explain its position regarding the issue raised by the Japanese delegation.

First of all, the Japanese delegation stated that the vote has demonstrated that a majority of United Nations Member States support the resolution on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, I would like to remind the Japanese delegation that if its members had a good sense of mathematical

calculation, they could also see that another majority of Member States voted against the resolution.

That said, my delegation wishes to make the following comments regarding the issue that was raised in the statement by the Japanese delegation.

The Korean people have a deep-seated grudge towards Japan, which has to be paid with blood. Japan, during the 40-odd years of its occupation of Korea, forcibly drafted and abducted 8.4 million Koreans and forced military sexual slavery on 200,000 women and girls — I repeat, 200,000 women and girls. Even today, after more than half a century, we do not know the whereabouts of most of those victims. The Japanese authorities who make a fuss about human rights and the rule of law are not giving a sincere and coherent response concerning the fate of those victims, and they have neither apologized nor honestly compensated for Japan's past crimes against humanity.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea maintains high vigilance against the threats posed by Japan in cooperation with the United States. Fully aware of its responsibility for the history and destiny of its people, as well as for peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in the Asia-Pacific region, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is accelerating its efforts to be fully prepared to resolutely counter any threats coming from Japan.

My delegation would like to conclude by urging the Japanese delegation to fully implement the Pyongyang Declaration, which is a real, historic document setting forth the road map for the development of bilateral relations between our two countries, instead of using it as an excuse for Japan to evade its responsibility and historical accountability for its wrongdoing. We urge the Japanese authorities to respect and fully implement the Declaration instead of debasing it.

Mr. Muhumuza (Uganda): As this is the first time I have taken the floor, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on the way in which you are conducting our deliberations.

My delegation has observed a disproportionate number of delegations voting in a manner in which they had not intended to vote. I would urge that the causes of that phenomenon be examined with a view to rectification.

The President: I now call on the representative of Belarus, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Petkevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus deeply regrets the adoption of resolution 61/175, entitled "The situation of human rights in Belarus". That resolution has nothing to do with human rights; it represents nothing more than the sponsors' imposition on the international community of their unilateral negative assessment of the internal and external policies of Belarus. The content of this document is based on humiliating, unfounded accusations, and the process of its adoption was based on unwillingness and lack of interest with regard to hearing the Belarusian side.

The accusations contained in the resolution are not new. Our opponents constantly use them in the context of bilateral relations and regional organizations. Now they are attempting to drag the General Assembly into this aggressive propaganda campaign to discredit the Government and the people of Belarus.

In our view, the resolution entitled "The situation of human rights in Belarus" creates no political or other kind of commitments for Belarus. The result of the voting shows that the opinion of the document's authors does not reflect the position of the international community. The majority of United Nations Member States did not vote in favour of the resolution. They did not believe its spurious allegations and did not endorse its unfounded and inappropriate demands.

At the same time, we would note that the adoption of this resolution will in no way have a negative impact on the cooperation of Belarus with United Nations human rights bodies. Belarus will continue, as before, to intensify that cooperation and to make our utmost contribution to the work of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies to promote and protect human rights in all countries.

In conclusion, I would like to sincerely thank our friends and all those who share our position for their support in opposing the adoption of this destructive document aimed against the Republic of Belarus.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 67.

Programme of work

The President: Before adjourning this meeting, I would like to consult representatives regarding an extension of the work of the Fifth Committee. Members will recall that, at its 72nd plenary meeting, on 11 December 2006, the General Assembly decided to extend the work of the Fifth Committee until Tuesday, 19 December. However, as the Fifth Committee has not yet completed its work, I propose that the Assembly further extend the work of the Fifth Committee until Thursday, 21 December.

In the absence of objection, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that proposal?

It was so decided.

The President: I would like to inform members that, owing to the lateness of the hour, we shall take up the remaining items tomorrow morning after the Assembly has taken action on draft resolution I, entitled "International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance", contained in the report of the Third Committee (A/61/448), under agenda item 68, entitled Report of the Human Rights Council.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.

United Nations A/61/PV.82

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

82nd plenary meeting
Wednesday, 20 December 2006, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 68

Report of the Human Rights Council

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/448 and Corr.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 28 of its report and a draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 29 of the same report.

I should like to inform members that action on the draft decision, entitled "Report of the Human Rights Council", has been postponed to a later date to allow time for a review by the Fifth Committee of the programme budget implications of the draft proposal contained in the report of the Human Rights Council. The Assembly will take action on the draft decision as soon as the report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications is complete.

The General Assembly will first consider draft resolution I.

The General Assembly is meeting today to adopt the draft International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. The practice of enforced disappearance is still widespread throughout the world. Unfortunate victims are abducted, and their families are kept in the dark, uninformed of their well-being or fate. Even worse, some of those who disappear are subject to torture and extrajudicial killing. Since 1980, there have been more than 51,000 enforced disappearances in more than 90 countries. More than 500 cases of enforced disappearance were registered last year alone.

Adopting the draft convention will help to prevent enforced disappearances and bring the perpetrators to justice. It will also provide justice for the victims and their families who have suffered. The draft convention also contains an innovative follow-up mechanism to ensure effective implementation. Moreover, the adoption of the draft convention will send a signal that the Human Rights Council can deliver concrete outcomes that have a worldwide impact. I hope that the General Assembly will be able to adopt the draft convention by consensus. I also call upon Member States to take, at the earliest opportunity, all necessary steps to ensure the full implementation of the draft convention.

We shall now take a decision on draft resolution I, entitled "International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/177).

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

06-67270 (E)

Mr. Lee-Smith (United Kingdom): My delegation apologizes for taking up the Assembly's time to speak in explanation of position, but by this resolution a new international human rights instrument has been adopted, and it is important to my delegation that the interpretation of the United Kingdom of some of the Convention's provisions be placed on record at the time of adoption.

The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption of draft resolution I contained in document A/61/448. We particularly wish to pay tribute to the non-governmental organizations that made an enormous contribution to the process of agreeing upon a text. The representatives of the victims of disappearances from all regions have provided a constant reminder of the need for us to finish our work and provide a tool to combat that atrocious and ongoing practice.

That said, the United Kingdom wishes to place on record the following understandings on certain provisions of the instrument. In relation to article 2, the United Kingdom notes that the placing of a person "outside the protection of the law" is an important element of the definition of an enforced disappearance, additional to its other elements. As such, the United Kingdom considers that the definition of an enforced disappearance in article 2 comprises the following elements: first, an arrest, detention, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty; secondly, that such acts are committed by agents of the State or by persons or groups acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the State; thirdly, that the act is followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person; and fourthly, that the disappeared person is placed outside the protection of the law.

The United Kingdom understands the term "outside the protection of the law" to mean that the person's deprivation of liberty or detention is not within the scope of relevant domestic legal rules governing deprivations of liberty or detention, or that those rules are not compatible with applicable international law. Accordingly, the United Kingdom understands article 20, which permits restrictions to the provision of information as set out in article 18, to apply to all situations where a person is not "outside the protection of the law" — in other words, where that person is within the State's domestic legal rules governing deprivation of liberty or detention, consistent with applicable international law.

The United Kingdom also wishes to place on record its understanding of article 43 of the Convention. The United Kingdom understands this provision to confirm that a State party's obligations under international humanitarian law, including its obligations and rights under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, remain lex specialis in situations of armed conflict and other situations to which international humanitarian law applies. The United Kingdom understands this article to operate as a "savings clause" in order to ensure that, where applicable, the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law take precedence over any other provisions contained in the Convention.

Finally, in relation to article 25 (4), we understand that that article does not entail an obligation to provide a legal procedure which would lead to an automatic review of the adoption. We also understand that the article does not require the automatic annulment of an adoption which stems from an enforced disappearance. We interpret the article to require States parties to have a procedure or procedures providing a possibility to apply for review of an adoption covered by that article. Whether a review or annulment is in fact ordered will be an issue to be determined according to the applicable legal procedures in the State concerned.

The President: I now call on those representatives who wish to make statements following the adoption.

Ms. Lintonen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine and Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

The European Union welcomes the adoption by consensus of the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance as one of the major achievements of the General Assembly this year. We would therefore like to thank

all delegations for joining the consensus. The very high number of sponsors of the resolution through which the Convention was adopted by the Third Committee is very encouraging, in particular with a view to universal ratification of that new instrument.

For over 25 years, victims' families, non-governmental organizations, many Governments — especially the Government of France — and international organizations have undertaken continuous and unflagging efforts for the adoption by the United Nations of an international instrument against enforced disappearances in order to tackle that heinous and inhuman affliction. And finally, here we are.

The adoption of the Convention by the General Assembly is a significant step forward in the promotion and protection of human rights. The Convention recognizes the right not to be subjected to enforced disappearance, as well as the right of victims and their relatives to justice and reparation. Enforced disappearance is qualified as a crime both in peace and in wartime, and no exceptional circumstance, be it a state of war, internal political instability or any public emergency, may be invoked as a justification for enforced disappearance.

In the Convention, States parties pledge to criminalize enforced disappearances and, accordingly, to try the perpetrators and masterminds. Moreover, pursuant to the new instrument, States parties undertake to prohibit secret detention and unofficial places of detention, as well as to reaffirm their obligation to provide legal guarantees in cases of deprivation of liberty. Such legal commitments are key to preventing situations in which a person could be relegated to total vulnerability at the hands of the perpetrators of the crime, deprived of all of his or her rights, and placed outside the protection of the law.

The Convention also lays the ground for an obligation on the part of States parties to guarantee the victims' relatives the right to know the truth about the circumstances of an enforced disappearance and the fate of the disappeared person. By those means, we can at least alleviate the torture caused by endless waiting and uncertainty about the return of one's beloved.

In our view, the adoption of the Convention by consensus fills a substantial gap in international human rights law, and sends a strong political signal from the international community that this shameful and still widespread practice must come to an end. It also demonstrates the will of the international community to put a stop to impunity for that grave human rights violation. The European Union is fully convinced that the Convention will serve as a powerful tool to prevent enforced disappearances and torture and to fight impunity for those crimes in the future.

In that regard, the adoption of the instrument is not just a token of our achievement; it also denotes a new starting point. The next step is to ensure that the Convention comes into force as soon as possible. The European Union therefore calls on all States Members of the United Nations to consider signing the Convention at the signing ceremony to be held in Paris on 6 February.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): France congratulates and thanks the Member States for the adoption by consensus of the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

This is an important text at the crossroads of human rights, international humanitarian law and international criminal law, which fills a legal void. Its adoption emphasizes once again the quality of the normative work of the General Assembly. The new instrument is emblematic of United Nations action to benefit each human being.

The Assembly's adoption of the Convention against enforced disappearance is the culmination of a struggle waged by victims' families for over 25 years. A new offence is recognized in international law, in peacetime as in wartime. The act of causing a person to disappear without any form of due process is what we call enforced disappearance.

On this historic day, let us remember a moment what forced disappearances meant in certain countries, especially in Latin America in the 1960s and 1980s. In practice, men, usually in civilian dress and armed, arrived at a person's home, generally a human rights defender or member of the opposition; they took that person away by force, without explanation, to an unknown place. There was no sign or news of this man or woman for many long days and weeks. When the relatives of the kidnapped person sought to inquire about the person's fate from the authorities, they were given no answer. In the best of cases an official inquiry would be opened; the inquiry was never successful or concluded with the release of the persons presumed guilty. Torture, and very often death, awaited the

disappeared person, whose rights were flouted and whose existence was passed over in silence. All too frequently, the family remained grief-stricken, sometimes for decades, in the agony of waiting and the uncertainty about a loved one's return; any closure from mourning was denied them. We therefore have at this moment an emotional thought for the victims' families — the mothers of the Plaza del Mayo in Argentina and the loved ones of more than 40,000 human beings whose disappearance has been recorded since 1980 in over 90 countries.

The shameful practice I have just described in the past tense is, unfortunately, not a practice of the past. We cannot present it to our children as a long-gone practice from a barbarous epoch. Enforced disappearance remains, unfortunately, a tangible reality. According to United Nations data, 535 people were victims in 2005, while 41,000 cases have been recorded around the world since 1980 and have still not been elucidated.

The drafting of the Convention we have just adopted was guided by two major requirements: prevention and justice.

The Convention is primarily an instrument of prevention. First, by acceding to the Convention, States will undertake to prohibit secret detentions and unofficial places of detention. They will also strengthen the procedural guarantees surrounding detention. Those are key commitments. Secondly, through the new treaty, the States parties will undertake to make enforced disappearance an offence and to bring to justice the perpetrators and those who ordered it. Lastly, an innovative international follow-up mechanism is established. The Committee on Enforced Disappearances, composed of 10 members, will assume a preventive function by making urgent appeals and by carrying out field visits if necessary. It may also, in the event of massive and systematic violations, alert the Secretary-General.

Thus, the Convention will be first an instrument of prevention. However, the new international instrument will also meet the requirement for justice. The relatives of a disappeared person will be able to claim their right to know the truth about the person's fate and the circumstances surrounding the disappearance. Victims and their families will be entitled to reparations for harm suffered. Lastly, any child adoption having its origin in an enforced disappearance will be illegal.

In order for the new treaty to enter into force as soon as possible — we hope by 2007 — I have the honour to announce that it will be open for signature and ratification to all Member States at a ceremony to be chaired by Mr. Douste-Blazy, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, in Paris on February. The adoption of the Convention by consensus, with the support of over 100 sponsoring countries, allows us to hope that the new instrument will be ratified universally. It is in that spirit that we invite all Member States to be represented in Paris on 6 February.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks you, Madam, for the opportunity to deliver this statement following the adoption by the General Assembly of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, an instrument of utmost importance to my country and its history. It is also a step forward for human rights, one of the pillars of our Organization.

The Convention is not only the result of the struggle of Member States and Governments, but has also involved the whole human rights movement for several decades. Argentina would like in particular to highlight the role played in that struggle by the organizations of civil society and by the associations of relatives and victims of human rights violations throughout the drafting, negotiation and approval of the instrument. In that context, I should like to make special mention of the efforts and sacrifices of the Grandmothers and Mothers of Plaza de Mayo from my own country.

The notion of the disappeared person is certainly one of the most horrific facts of the twentieth century. For Argentina, it has a particularly sad significance, since in the 1970s the military dictatorship systematically carried out that abhorrent practice. Worse yet, unfortunately, it was not possible for the former Human Rights Commission of the United Nations to condemn Argentina publicly, which undoubtedly undermined the Commission's credibility.

Far from belonging exclusively to yesterday's nightmares, disappearances are also a current terrible political fact. Some 40,000 cases were registered by 2005. Every day, men and women in all continents disappear, abducted by security forces of the State that later deny having them in custody.

We are convinced that the Convention, once in force, will be an essential tool in the prevention of such cases and in the fight against the scourge of enforced disappearances, putting an end to the suffering of many who today are facing the abuse of power by Governments with no choice but to give in to such abuses. Thus, the Convention will also serve to punish the perpetrators.

From the perspective of the progressive development of international human rights law, the Convention recognizes the right of all persons not to become victims of enforced disappearances; contains the first definition of the concept; includes a series of measures to investigate disappearances and to bring those responsible to trial; establishes that the systematic practice of this crime constitutes a crime against humanity; and acknowledges the right to reparation, justice and the truth.

We hope that the adoption of the Convention will be not the end of the road, but the beginning of a new phase in the promotion and protection of human rights and a tangible step forward in the fight against impunity. Therefore, on behalf of my country, I urge all Member States to participate in the signing event that will take place in Paris on February 6, and all their Parliaments subsequently to ratify it.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Jaime Robotham was a friend from secondary school, the Liceo de Aplicación in Santiago de Chile, many decades ago. He was a happy young man, intelligent and a good football player. We called him "Baldy" because even as a teenager he had a receding hairline. The study hours shared with him and other friends were always an adventure, as Jaime invented games and made us dream.

I did not see him for many years after we left secondary school. I heard that just, like me, he was a supporter of President Salvador Allende. I did not receive any news about him until after the military coup in 1973, with the appearance of a fatidic list of disappeared persons in July 1975. He had been detained and tortured towards the end of 1974. Jaime was included in a shameful intelligence operation carried out by the Chilean dictatorship and other dictatorships of neighbouring countries to obfuscate his disappearance and those of more than 100 other people as if they had died fighting one other in Argentina. The fake list was published in magazines in Brazil and Argentina. Both magazines, until then unknown, published only one edition and then ceased to circulate. That was a clear demonstration that enforced disappearance crossed borders and was an international crime. Until today, the mortal remains of my friend have not been found.

That is why today is an important day for human rights. The adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance represents the culmination of years of work by Governments, governmental organizations and civil society to combat the scourge of enforced disappearance.

A tool of repression and political control, enforced disappearance spread across the Latin American continent as an inherent component of the actions of the military dictatorships of the 1970s and 1980s. In my country alone, 1,200 cases of enforced disappearance were documented during the Pinochet dictatorship. Enforced disappearance was always accompanied by other crimes, such as torture and extrajudicial execution.

For my country, the General Assembly's adoption of this Convention reflects a profound sense of ethics and historical acknowledgement, because it addresses a reality that, prior to the restoration of democracy in Chile in 1990, affected hundreds of our compatriots on the sole basis of political dissent. As the President of Chile, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, stated on 30 August 2006 when declaring the National Day of the Detained and Disappeared:

> "The cruelty of forced disappearance is incommensurable. It is not just illegal arrest, not just torture — which is a crime against humanity in itself — not just summary execution without due process, not just extermination. Disappearance is not just a cowardly way of trying to hide a murder; it is a way of perpetuating the pain of the victims' families, depriving them of mourning and creating uncertainty that, for hundreds of families, will last for years. And, of course, it is all the more serious when this is carried out as part of State policy."

The Convention that we have just adopted fills an important gap in international law, which had not envisaged a specific convention to combat enforced disappearance. The Convention stipulates that no one

shall be subjected to enforced disappearance. This is enshrined as an absolute right without exceptions, even under exceptional constitutional circumstances. It appropriately characterizes the widespread or systematic practice of enforced disappearance as a crime against humanity.

The Convention places due emphasis on the aspects of prevention of enforced disappearance through provisions such as a prohibition on secret detention; a guarantee that deprivation of liberty will take place in officially recognized and supervised places of deprivation of liberty; an obligation to investigate until the fate of the disappeared person is established; and an obligation to take measures to ensure that enforced disappearance constitutes an offence under criminal law, to ensure access to persons deprived of liberty in all circumstances and to ensure the right to a prompt and effective judicial remedy, which may not be suspended or restricted in any circumstances.

Within the set of recognized rights, we highlight the right to obtain information on persons deprived of liberty and the right of all victims to know the truth regarding the circumstances of the enforced disappearance, the progress and results of the investigation and the fate of the disappeared person. The latter right is intended to respond to one of the most heartfelt demands of the families of disappeared persons.

In our view, the establishment of a Committee on Enforced Disappearances, responsible for implementing the provisions of the Convention, is an appropriate institutional option that will undoubtedly have an impact on the Convention's effectiveness.

In short, we believe that the Convention is sufficiently well equipped to impose specific obligations on States to protect the rights of victims and their families.

"The forgotten past is full of memories" is a phrase inscribed on a monument in a former secret prison in Santiago, where hundreds of Chilean women and men disappeared and were murdered. To them, we dedicate as a modest tribute the Convention that we have adopted today, reaffirming the commitment of the Government of Chile to the fight against enforced disappearance.

Mr. Takase (Japan): My delegation would like to congratulate the Assembly on its adoption by consensus of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. The Government of Japan strongly supports the idea that no one shall be subjected to enforced disappearance, as stipulated in article 1 of the Convention.

It is for that reason that we participated actively in the elaboration of this important document and that we are satisfied with the text we have produced. Our interpretation of the Convention was made clear when we adopted the draft text in the Third Committee. We highly appreciate the sustained efforts of all interested parties, especially the delegation of France, to bring our work to a successful conclusion.

Enforced disappearance is a terrible and hideous crime. Today, we gain a valuable legal tool to combat it. My delegation believes that the international community must make the best use of this tool in order to ensure that enforced disappearance is no longer committed anywhere in the world and to bring its victims back to their families.

Mr. Romero-Martínez (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today, we have participated in the adoption of a Convention that we regard as historic. Honduras is very pleased to have the honour to be a sponsor of the draft resolution by which the Assembly adopted this important Convention. We believe that we have taken a very significant step forward in international law today.

We believe that our States and Governments are undertaking a great commitment with full awareness and responsibility. Those terrible nights and days in our countries — days of horror and terror — must be left behind. That is why the adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance is the beginning of a new phase in the genuine realization of human rights and the end of impunity.

For our new democracies, this is a very significant step forward in guaranteeing freedoms. We congratulate all those — particularly the members of civil society, the non-governmental organizations, the States, the organizations and the individuals — who were involved in the long process that was completed today. Today is a day to be remembered in the hearts and minds of all democrats, all who cry out for greater

justice and all those of us who hope for a world that is free, just and without human rights violations.

We hope that through the signing of this Convention, this crime against humanity will be eliminated once and for all.

Mr. Sin Song Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Today, we adopted the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. My delegation would like to avail itself of this opportunity to mention its views for the sake of better understanding among all delegations on the matter.

First of all, the abduction issues that Japan has so vainly tried to get support for on every occasion are those that are already fully resolved, thanks to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's sincere and humanitarian measures and endeavours. Thus, they do not need to be discussed any further. The abduction issue is abused by right-wing political forces in Japan solely to realize their political ambitions, and thus has nothing substantially to do with human rights. The only reason why Japan is so obstinate on the already resolved abduction issue is to cover up its crimes committed during the 40-odd years of its occupation of Korea, forcibly drafting and abducting 8.4 million Koreans and forcing sexual slavery upon 200,000 women and girls.

The reason why my delegation is today pointing out those facts is to cite one example that has recently arisen. My delegation takes this opportunity to inform all delegations of the following most vivid and recent case of abduction of a citizen of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by Japanese. I quote a letter sent by Mr. Kim to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Education Commission on 30 April 1992, right after he was reported missing:

> "I am Kim Thae Yong, room chief of Kim Hyong Jik University of Education, and had been teaching the Korean language in Yuzhno Sakhalinsk in Sakhalin Province of the Russian Federation. I was taken here while making arrangements for a trip to my country after I was told late in December of last year to celebrate the New Year's Day there. I was instructed to write a programme for teaching Japanese the Russian and Korean languages and methods of teaching them. Those who instructed me to do so are well informed of me. They say they will let me go back only after Korea is reunified. I have written to the best of my ability despite the high blood pressure that torments me. I fell unconscious due to a serious attack of brain haemorrhaging early in the morning of last 16 February. Though my trouble has passed the critical point, I remain completely paralyzed on the left half of my body. I am under treatment with a Japanese family at present. They say I am in Sapporo in Hokkaido, but it is a place far from human habitation. It is my assumption that I am in a place farther away from Sapporo. They seem to be doing their best to cure me so that I may finish my writings. I tried to let you know about my situation as quickly as possible, but there was no way. I am under strict control to prevent me from getting in touch with the outside world. I am writing this letter unobserved by anyone. An old person who cooks for me is sympathetic to me, who am in the grip of anxiety and unable to eat. The old person is kind-hearted. It is hard to believe that this letter will reach my country. It may be my last chance. I long to see the country where I was born and grew up and very much miss my trustworthy disciples and comrades and the beloved members of my family, who eagerly await me. I swear I will remain true to the beloved country to the last moments of my life. Best regards. 30 April, 1992."

Stamped on the envelop of the letter was the symbol "6.V.92 12-18 Japan HOKKAIDO WAATSU", part of the designation of a Japanese post office.

The members of Kim's family have since made painstaking efforts to learn his whereabouts through various channels. They have repeatedly asked the Japanese side to settle the points raised as soon as possible, extremely worried about their father, who was well above 70 years old.

Through the bilateral channels of the Red Cross Societies, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea asked Japan to render cooperation in finding Kim's whereabouts, at the request of his family. So far, however, no sincere or concrete cooperation and answer have been received from Japan at all. The insincere approach taken by Japan towards the issue of probing the case is intolerable both from the basic humanitarian point of view and from the standpoint of improving bilateral relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan.

We strongly condemn this case as a serious infringement on the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as Kim, an able linguist of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, has been lured away and abducted by Japan. We once again strongly urge Japan, which has so welcomed the adoption of the Convention today, to exert sincere efforts to ensure that the truth behind the case is thoroughly probed and clarified so as to help the members of Mr. Kim's family realize their desire for reunion with him as early as possible. We also request Member States' kind assistance in pressing Japan to settle the current case of enforced disappearance and to return the victim to his native home.

The President: I call on the representative of Bangladesh on a point of order.

Ms. Ahmed (Bangladesh): I apologize for taking the floor at this stage on a point of order.

My delegation joined the consensus in the adoption of resolution 61/177 on the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. We wish to thank all interested delegations, particularly the delegation of France, for their role in that regard.

The name of my country has been erroneously recorded in the list of sponsors of the resolution. I seek your kind indulgence in requesting its deletion, Madam, and my delegation hopes that the correction will be duly reflected in the final document.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Japan, who has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Takase (Japan): My delegation should like to exercise its right of reply to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

My delegation regrets very, very much that the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has again made a false allegation on the issue of abduction, especially on this important day, when we have adopted the important International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

As my delegation has repeatedly explained, all such allegations made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are unsubstantiated and the figures are exaggerated. My delegation cannot accept all such allegations. This morning, my delegation would like to make it clear again that the Government of Japan has never been involved in any abduction of any nationals.

Lastly, I would like to reiterate once again that, with the adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the world community should make the best use of that tool in order to ensure that enforced disappearance is no longer committed anywhere in the world.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Sin Song Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation really did not wish to take the floor at this time, but we have been somewhat compelled to do so.

The abduction issue has already been cleared up thanks to the sincere efforts of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The abduction issue has been somehow and purposely internationalized by the Japanese because they really wish to abuse it for their political agenda. It is so well known to the world that my delegation does not really wish to repeat it again at this moment.

The Japanese delegation referred to the so-called unsubstantiated allegation of my delegation regarding the recent abduction, saying that Japan is not at all involved in such cases of enforced disappearance. However, with respect to the case that I referred to in my statement, I should like to read out a part of the statement issued by our Ministry for Public Security this year, in order to make it very clear that cases of abduction of citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by Japanese nationals are quite real:

(*spoke in French*)

> "Japanese provocations against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have recently intensified. Right-wing reactionary forces in Japan are calling for the imposition of sanctions and are fanning hostility against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with respect to the issue of abductions, which has already been resolved. They are also continuing their unprecedented repression of Koreans residing in Japan. Moreover, with the

manipulation of the United States and Japanese intelligence and plot-breeding agencies and other right-wing conservative forces, anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea organizations and individuals have abducted some of our fellow citizens in broad daylight by masquerading as non-governmental organizations supposedly providing humanitarian assistance.

"We consider such acts to be serious violations of our national sovereignty and the sovereignty of our citizens, and part and parcel of a conspiracy to overthrow our country's regime. Among its first measures in response, the Ministry has issued arrest warrants for members of a Japanese non-governmental organization, including Fumiaki Yamata, Hiroshi Kato and Takayuki Noguchi, in accordance with the relevant articles of criminal law and criminal procedure law of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They worked in secret operations to lure and abduct citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including those who had returned to their homeland from Japan, their children and Japanese women living in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"Through diplomatic channels, we have demanded that the Japanese Government extradite those criminals. The Ministry, which is responsible for protecting and defending our system and the lives and property of our people, will take the measures necessary to that end in territory under the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and wherever cooperation is possible."

That statement of the Ministry of Public Security fully demonstrates that the case referred to in the statement made by my delegation earlier is in no way a mirage. It is a real, concrete fact of which the world is not aware. We now wish to bring it to the international community's attention.

(*spoke in English*)

The abduction issue is not solely one of abductions by citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The abduction issue was created long ago by the Japanese and has a very long history that has not been forgotten by the Korean people. Appropriate compensation and apologies from the Japanese Government are still due. How could that country, Japan, dare to welcome the adoption of this very important Convention when it has dared to do such inhumane and anti-humanitarian acts? Those are considered crimes, and if the Japanese really wish to cover up their past and to sustain their crimes like that, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will take every measure possible to let the international community know everything about those cases and to take every possible measure within its scope to settle all those issues and to get its citizens back to their country.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Japan to speak again in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Takase (Japan): My delegation reiterates first that the Government of Japan has never, ever been involved in any abduction of any nationals. Secondly, as for the issue of the past, we have repeatedly made our position clear, so I will not repeat it this morning. However, we should like to say once again that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should not confuse a past issue that has already been resolved with the abduction of Japanese citizens that has not yet been resolved.

The Government of Japan can never accept the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the effect that the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens is resolved. The issue is not resolved. There are at least 17 Japanese nationals who have been abducted by the North Korean authorities. Five of them have been returned to Japan, but the fate of the rest of the victims is not yet known.

The Government of Japan would like to urge the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond sincerely to the inquiries of my Government and to reveal the whereabouts of the rest of the victims.

Again, I would like to reiterate that the Government of Japan can never accept the allegation made by the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens is resolved. It is not resolved, and we urge the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond sincerely to this issue.

The President: I call on the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to speak again in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Sin Song Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I am sorry to take the floor again, but my delegation would like to exercise its second right of reply just because the Japanese delegation has tried to cover up and evade its legal and historical responsibility and accountability to liquidate its past crimes. The past crimes, they say, are unsubstantiated, but there are still many elderly people in Korea who remember vividly the crimes that were committed by the Japanese military during its occupation of Korea. That cannot be forgotten so easily, unless some disaster should happen.

I think that the Japanese delegation, instead of commenting wrongly, with false information and not on the basis of realities, should try to sincerely apologize, which it strives not to do. But the Japanese should do their utmost to compensate and duly apologize to the Korean people. That is the only thing we ask of them, but they are trying to evade that responsibility, which is a historical duty and obligation of Japan.

About the cases of abduction of citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the Japanese, they are also a de facto reality. They are not known to the world because the Japanese exercise their influence through money and by exerting political pressure on other countries not to recognize that reality.

When we consider the issue of enforced disappearance, we must acknowledge that it is very important to liquidate such crimes, but we should certainly not tolerate any act of compelling other nations not to recognize all the forced drafting and abduction of a nation's people — in particular, the Korean people — by Japan in the past, at present and — who knows? — in the future. It could happen again. That should not be forgotten, and the international community, instead of taking Japan's side because of its influence, should also strongly ask Japan to duly compensate and apologize to the Korean people for what it has done and what it is doing.

That is my delegation's last word.

The President: We shall now take a decision on draft resolution II, entitled "Working group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration in accordance with paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 49/214 of 23 December 1994". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal,

Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Draft resolution II was adopted by 85 votes to none, with 89 abstentions (resolution 61/178).

[Subsequently the delegation of Saudi Arabia advised the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 68.

Agenda item 67 (*continued*)

Promotion and protection of human rights

(d) Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/443/Add.4)

The President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Third Committee (A/61/443/Add.4)?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 67?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 98

Crime prevention and criminal justice

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/444)

The President: The Assembly has before it four draft resolutions recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 25 of its report (A/61/444) and one draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 26 of the same report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to IV, one by one, and on the draft decision.

Draft resolution I is entitled "International cooperation in the prevention, combating and elimination of kidnapping and in providing assistance to victims". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/179).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/180).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/181).

The President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 61/182).

The President: We now turn to the draft decision, entitled "Documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the question of crime prevention and criminal justice". May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 98?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 99

International drug control

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/445)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 12 of its report (A/61/445). We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "International cooperation against the world drug problem". The Third Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/183).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 110 (*continued*)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/446)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 5 of its report (A/61/446). We will now take action on the draft decision. The Third Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Programme of work of the Third Committee for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 110.

Agenda item 118

Programme planning

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/447)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/61/447). We will now take action on the draft decision. The Third Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 118.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.

United Nations A/61/PV.83

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

83rd plenary meeting
Wednesday, 20 December 2006, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Reports of the Second Committee

The President: The General Assembly will consider the reports of the Second Committee on agenda items 40, 42, 50, 51 and its sub-items (a) to (d), 52, 53 and its sub-items (a) to (g), 54, 55 and its sub-items (a) to (e), 56 and its sub-items (a) and (b), 57 and its sub-items (a) and (b), 58, 59 and its sub-items (a) and (b), 69 and its sub-items (b) and (c), 110 and 118.

I request the Rapporteur of the Second Committee, Ms. Vanessa Gomes of Portugal, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Second Committee.

Ms. Gomes (Portugal), Rapporteur of the Second Committee: I have the honour to present for the Assembly's consideration the following reports of the Second Committee on the agenda items allocated to it by the Assembly at its sixty-first session.

Under agenda item 40, entitled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 15 of document A/61/418, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 42, entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council", which is allocated to the plenary, the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 7 of document A/61/432, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 50, entitled "Information and communication technologies for development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 7 of document A/61/419, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 51, entitled "Macroeconomic policy questions", the report of the Committee is issued in five parts. The report under the chapeau is contained in document A/61/420, and the recommendations are contained in the following addenda:

Under sub-item 51 (a), entitled "International trade and development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 6 of document A/61/420/Add.1, the adoption of one draft resolution. In connection with this report, I wish to make a correction: in paragraph 5, which falls under the consideration of the draft resolution, Australia, also on behalf of New Zealand, and Canada should be added to the list of representatives having made statements in explanation of vote before the vote.

Under sub-item 51 (b), entitled "International financial system and development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 6 of document A/61/420/Add.2, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item 51 (c), entitled "External debt crisis and development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of document A/61/420/Add.3, the adoption of one draft resolution.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

06-67295 (E)

In connection with this report, I wish to make the following corrections.

In paragraph 6 of the report, which falls under the consideration of the draft resolution, after New Zealand, "also on behalf of Australia and Canada" should be added.

In the text of the draft resolution itself, the ninth preambular paragraph should read as follows:

> "Welcoming also the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, which will enable a marked increase in expenditures on health, education and other social services consistent with national priorities and development plans by heavily indebted poor countries,".

I note that there is also a footnote in this paragraph. In the fourth line of the English text of operative paragraph 4, the word "underlines" should read "underscores". In operative paragraph 8, "stresses" should be replaced by "underlines". In the sixth line of operative paragraph 9, "underlines" should read "underscores". In the fourth line of operative paragraph 15, the words "assistance under" should be deleted.

Under sub-item 51 (d), entitled "Commodities", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 15 of document A/61/420/Add.4, the adoption of two draft resolutions. In connection with this report, I wish to make a correction to draft resolution II, entitled "Commodities". The beginning of operative paragraph 12 should read as follows:

> "Calls for capacity-building support by the relevant international organizations and by developed countries, and also encourages the private sector...."

Under agenda item 52, entitled "Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 13 of document A/61/421, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 53, entitled "Sustainable development", the report of the Second Committee is issued in eight parts. The report under the chapeau is contained in document A/61/422, and the recommendations are contained in the following addenda.

Under sub-item 53 (a), entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 24 of document A/61/422/Add.1 and Corr.1, the adoption of four draft resolutions.

Under sub-item 53 (b), entitled "Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 15 of document A/61/422/Add.2, the adoption of two draft resolutions.

Under sub-item 53 (c), entitled "International Strategy for Disaster Reduction", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 19 of document A/61/422/Add.3, the adoption of three draft resolutions.

Under sub-item 53 (d), entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 10 of document A/61/422/Add.4, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item 53 (e), entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of document A/61/422/Add.5, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item 53 (f), entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 13 of document A/61/422/Add.6, the adoption of two draft resolutions. In connection with this report, I wish to make the following corrections. In paragraph 3 of the report, which falls under the discussion of draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.29/Rev.1, entitled "International Year of Biodiversity, 2010", the names of Israel, Japan and Mexico should be added to the list of sponsors. In the text of draft resolution I, entitled "International Year of Biodiversity, 2010", the fifth preambular paragraph should read:

> "Further recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,".

The rest of the paragraph should be deleted.

Under sub-item 53 (g), entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its ninth special session", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 7 of document A/61/422/Add.7, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 54, entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 12 of document A/61/423, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 55, entitled "Globalization and interdependence", the report of the Committee is issued in five parts. The report under the chapeau is contained in document A/61/424, and the recommendations are contained in the following addenda.

Under sub-item 55 (a), entitled "Globalization and interdependence", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 9 of document A/61/424/Add.1, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item 55 (b), entitled "International migration and development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of document A/61/424/Add.2, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item 55 (d), entitled "Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of document A/61/424/Add.4, the adoption of one draft resolution. In connection with this report, I wish to make two corrections to paragraph 6, which falls under the consideration of the draft resolution. The names of all the countries that align themselves with the European Union should be inserted, and the name of the United States of America should be inserted after Canada.

Under sub-item 55 (e), entitled "Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of document A/61/424/Add.5, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 56, entitled "Groups of countries in special situations", the report of the Committee is issued in three parts. The report under the chapeau is contained in document A/61/425, and the recommendations are contained in the following addenda.

Under sub-item 56 (a), entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of document A/61/425/Add.1, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item 56 (b), entitled "Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 7 of document A/61/425/Add.2, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 57, entitled "Eradication of poverty and other development issues", the report of the Committee is issued in three parts. The report under the chapeau is contained in document A/61/426, and the recommendations are contained in the following addenda.

Under sub-item 57 (a), entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 14 of document A/61/426/Add.1, the adoption of two draft resolutions. In connection with this report, I wish to make the following correction to draft resolution I, entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)". I draw the attention of the General Assembly to operative paragraph 4, which should read as follows:

> "Urges all Governments, the international community, including the United Nations system, and all other actors to continue to pursue seriously the objective of the eradication of poverty".

Under sub-item 57(b), entitled "Industrial development cooperation", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of document A/61/426/Add.2, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 58, entitled "Operational activities for development: operational activities for development of the United Nations system", the

recommendation contained in the report in document A/61/427 has already been adopted by the Assembly at its 59th meeting, on 28 November.

Moving on to agenda item 59, entitled "Training and research", the report of the Committee is issued in three parts. The report under the chapeau is contained in document A/61/428, and the recommendations are contained in the following addenda.

Under sub-item 59 (a), entitled "United Nations University", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 7 of document A/61/428/Add.1, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item 59 (b), entitled "United Nations Institute for Training and Research", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 6 of document A/61/428/Add.2, the adoption of one draft resolution. I wish to make a correction to paragraph 5 of the report, under section II. "After the adoption" should be replaced with "Before the adoption".

Under agenda item 69, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the report of the Committee is issued in three parts. The report under the chapeau is contained in document A/61/429, and the recommendations are contained in the following addenda:

Under sub-item 69 (b), entitled "Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 19 of document A/61/429/Add.1, the adoption of three draft resolutions.

Under sub-item 69 (c), entitled "Participation of volunteers, 'White Helmets', in the activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 6 of document A/61/429/Add.2, the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 110, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 5 of document A/61/430, the adoption of one draft decision.

In light of the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 61/134 on 14 December, in which it decided, inter alia, that the sub-items of its agenda relating to the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations currently considered by the Second Committee should be reallocated to its plenary as of its sixty-second session, it is the understanding of the members of the Second Committee that the draft programme of work recommended for adoption in this report would be adjusted accordingly.

Under agenda item 118, entitled "Programme planning", the Second Committee recommends, in paragraph 6 of document A/61/431, the adoption of one draft decision.

First, I thank members for their patience while I write out some rather lengthy notes. I would like to request delegations having any queries about technical corrections to the texts of draft resolutions that were adopted by the Second Committee to communicate them as soon as possible to the secretariat of the Second Committee, in order for these corrections to be made prior to the final issuance of texts as resolutions of the General Assembly.

Also, Madam President, may I take this opportunity to thank you most sincerely and to also express our thanks to the Chairperson, Her Excellency Mrs. Tiina Intelmann of Estonia, as well as the Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Benedicto Fonseca Filho of Brazil, Mr. Prayono Atiyanto of Indonesia and Mr. Aboubacar Sadikh Barry of Senegal, for their extraordinary collaboration and partnership during this most challenging and successful session of the Second Committee.

Finally, I also thank sincerely the secretariat for the outstanding assistance provided to me and to the other members of the Bureau throughout the session.

I take this opportunity before concluding to wish all delegations well-deserved happy holidays and hope to see you all in the New Year.

The President: I thank the Rapporteur of the Second Committee. If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Second Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of

delegations regarding the recommendations of the Second Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Second Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Second Committee, unless the secretariat is notified otherwise in advance. That means that where recorded votes or separate votes were taken, we will do the same. I also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Second Committee.

The Assembly is reminded that shortly we will be taking action on draft resolutions recommended for adoption by the Second Committee and as such, those draft resolutions can no longer be additionally co-sponsored in plenary by Member States.

Any corrections delegations may have concerning the reports of the Second Committee, including the listing of sponsors of a draft resolution contained in the reports of the Committee, should be submitted to the secretariat of the Second Committee for the issuance of corrigenda.

Before proceeding further, I wish to draw the attention of members to a note by the secretariat distributed desk to desk. The note will serve as a reference guide for action on draft resolutions and decisions recommended by the Second Committee in its report. Members will find in column 6 of the note the numbers of the draft resolutions or decisions for action in the plenary, with the corresponding numbers of draft resolutions or decisions of the Second Committee in column 3 of the same note.

Agenda item 40

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/418)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 15 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra

Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Nauru, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu

The draft resolution was adopted by 164 votes to 6, with 9 abstentions (resolution 61/184).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 40?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 42

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/432)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Proclamation of international years". The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/185).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 42.

Agenda item 50

Information and communication technologies for development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/419)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision, entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on information and communication technologies for development: progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/295". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 50?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 51

Macroeconomic policy questions

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/420)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 51.

(a) International trade and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/420/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "International trade and development". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan,

Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Moldova, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The draft resolution was adopted by 129 votes to 2, with 52 abstentions (resolution 61/186).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Moldova advised the Secretariat that they had intended to abstain.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 51?

It was so decided.

(b) International financial system and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/420/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/187).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 51?

It was so decided.

(c) External debt crisis and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/420/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, as orally corrected. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution, as orally corrected?

The draft resolution, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 61/188).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 51?

It was so decided.

(d) Commodities

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/420/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 15 of its report. We will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions.

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "International Year of Natural Fibres". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/189).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "Commodities", was adopted by the Second Committee and has been orally corrected. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution II, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution II, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 61/190).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 51 and of agenda item 51 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 52

Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/421)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 13 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/191).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 52?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 53

Sustainable development

Report of the Second Committee (document A/61/422)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 53.

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/422/Add.1 and Corr.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it four draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 24 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to IV.

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "International Year of Sanitation 2008". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/192).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "International Year of Forests, 2011". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/193).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Oil slick on Lebanese shores". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain,

Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Palau, United States of America

Draft resolution III was adopted by 170 votes to 6 (resolution 61/194).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution IV, entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 61/195).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

(b) Follow up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/422/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 15 of its report.

Draft resolution I, entitled "Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/196).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/197).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/422/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 19 of its report. We will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions.

Draft resolution I, entitled "International Strategy for Disaster Reduction", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/198).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Nino phenomenon", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/199).

The President: Draft resolution III, entitled "Natural disasters and vulnerability", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/200).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/422/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 10 of its report.

In the Committee, a separate vote was taken on operative paragraph 10 of the draft resolution. However, the secretariat has just been informed by interested delegations that no vote will be requested on this operative paragraph.

The Assembly will now vote on the draft resolution. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The draft resolution was adopted by 137 votes to none, with 47 abstentions (resolution 61/201).

[Subsequently the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina advised the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan for an explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. Ito (Japan): At the plenary meeting of the Second Committee on 8 December, my delegation requested a separate vote on this resolution. This time we did not call for a separate vote, but voted in favour of the resolution. However, Japan still has reservations about the structure of operative paragraph 10, which relates to the institutional linkage between the United Nations and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Global warming is an urgent challenge, and the UNFCCC is one of the most important forums we have for international negotiation and action. The environment is one of the pillars of the work of the United Nations. To ensure urgent and effective action in this area, the knowledge and experience of this Organization should be put to full use in the activities of the UNFCCC.

That said, the UNFCCC is an independent treaty body with its own budget and secretariat, which now consists of more than two hundred staff members. The Government of Japan has consistently maintained that the United Nations should not be called on to shoulder the expenses of the UNFCCC. My delegation believes that starting with the 2008-2009 biennial budget the UNFCCC should assume full responsibility for its complement of service-related costs.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/422/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/202).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

(f) Convention on Biological Diversity

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/422/Add.6)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 13 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I and II.

Draft resolution I is entitled "International Year of Biodiversity, 2010". It has been orally corrected. The Second Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution I, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution I, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 61/203).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/204).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 53?

It was so decided.

(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its ninth special session

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/422/Add.7)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report, on which we will now take a decision. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/205).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 53 and of agenda item 53 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 54

Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/423)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 12 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/206).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 54?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 55

Globalization and interdependence

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/424)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 55.

(a) Globalization and interdependence

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/424/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence". The Second Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/207).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 55?

It was so decided.

(b) International migration and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/424/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/208).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 55?

It was so decided.

(c) Culture and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/424/Add.3)

The President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 55?

It was so decided.

(d) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/424/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report, of which we will now take a decision. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/209).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 55?

(e) Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/424/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/210).

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Poland, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Ms. Pęksa-Krawiec (Poland): I would like to make a short statement in connection with sub-item (e), "Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy", of agenda item 55, "Globalization and interdependence".

The delegation of Poland would like to put on record that Poland wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of the Czech Republic at the 25th meeting of the Second Committee, on 7 November 2006.

In connection with that statement, I would like to state that Poland has completed its transformation from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented economy, and should therefore no longer be considered as a country with an economy in transition. I would also like to take this opportunity to underline the fact that Poland, together with other States, will continue its support for countries with economies in transition in their efforts to transform and integrate themselves into the world economy.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 55 and of agenda item 55 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 56

Groups of countries in special situations

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/425)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 56.

(a) Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/425/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/211).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 56?

It was so decided.

(b) Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/425/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation". The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/212).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 56 and of agenda item 56 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 57

Eradication of poverty and other development issues

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/426)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 57.

(a) Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/426/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 14 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolution I, as orally corrected, and draft resolution II.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)". It has been orally corrected. The Second Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution I, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution I, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 61/213).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Role of microcredit and microfinance in the eradication of poverty". The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt it as well?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/214).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 57?

It was so decided.

(b) Industrial development cooperation

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/426/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/215).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 57 and of agenda item 57 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 58

Operational activities for development: operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/427)

The President: The Assembly will recall that the General Assembly considered the report of the Second Committee on agenda item 58 at its 59th plenary meeting, on 28 November 2006. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 58?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 59

Training and research

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/428)

The President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 59.

(a) United Nations University

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/428/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/216).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 59?

It was so decided.

(b) United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/428/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. The Second Committee adopted the draft decision. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 59 and of agenda 59 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 69

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/429)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 69.

(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/429/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 19 of its report. The Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions.

Draft resolution I, entitled "Special economic assistance for the Philippines", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt it?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/217).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "Humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Liberia", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/218).

The President: Draft resolution III, entitled "International assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/219).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 69?

It was so decided.

(c) Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in the activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/429/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/220).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 69 and of agenda item 69 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 110 (*continued*)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/430)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 5 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. The draft decision, entitled "Programme of work of the Second Committee for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes also to adopt it?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: I should like to remind members of the statement made by the Rapporteur at the beginning of this meeting, namely, that the programme of work of the Second Committee just adopted will be adjusted in the light of resolution 61/134, of 14 December 2006.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 110.

Agenda item 118 (*continued*)

Programme planning

Report of the Second Committee (A/61/431)

The President: The General Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. The Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 118.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Second Committee before it.

Agenda item 44 (*continued*)

Culture of peace

Draft resolution (A/61/L.11/Rev.2)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on this agenda item at its 47th and 48th plenary meetings, on 3 November 2006.

I call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Hayee (Pakistan): I have requested the floor to introduce two oral revisions to draft resolution A/61/L.11/Rev.2, entitled "Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace". These revisions are the result of our last-minute consultations with interested delegations. I am pleased to read out these revisions, which I believe are also being distributed to delegations in writing. The revisions relate to paragraphs 12 and 14 of the draft resolution.

As revised, paragraph 12 should read as follows:

> "Encourages the promotion of dialogue among the media from all cultures and civilizations, emphasizes that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, and reaffirms that the exercise of this right carries with it special duties and responsibilities and may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and necessary for the respect of the rights or reputations of others, the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals;".

The second revision is to operative paragraph 14 of the draft resolution. The final words of paragraph 14 should be deleted; the paragraph as revised should read as follows:

> "Decides to convene in 2007 a high-level dialogue on interreligious and intercultural cooperation for the promotion of tolerance, understanding and universal respect on matters of freedom of religion or belief and cultural diversity, in coordination with other similar initiatives in this area;".

I wish to thank all delegations for their intensive engagement in the process of consultations, which were conducted in a transparent and open manner for a considerably long time. I wish also to thank all the sponsors of the draft resolution. I hope that this important draft resolution can be adopted by consensus by the General Assembly today.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/61/L.11/Rev.2, as orally revised.

In connection with the draft resolution, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Chief, General Assembly Affairs Branch): I would like to inform members that, in connection with draft resolution A/61/L.11/Rev.2, entitled "Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace", I wish to put on record the following statement of financial implications, on behalf of the Secretary-General and in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, as orally revised, the General Assembly

> "Decides to convene in 2007 a high-level dialogue on interreligious and intercultural cooperation for the promotion of tolerance, understanding and universal respect on matters of freedom of religion or belief and cultural diversity, in coordination with other similar initiatives in this area;".

Under the terms of paragraph 16 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly

> "Requests the Secretary-General to ensure the systematic and organizational follow-up of all interreligious, intercultural and intercivilizational matters within the United Nations system and overall coordination and coherence in its interreligious, intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue and cooperation efforts, inter alia, through the designation of a focal unit in the Secretariat to handle these matters;".

Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, no additional conference servicing resources and no public information coverage would be required, as it is understood that the high-level

dialogue referred to in paragraph 14 of the draft resolution would be part of the work of the General Assembly, and would be held within the context of its plenary meetings, which are budgeted and provided for throughout the year. Since the exact requirements of the high-level dialogue have yet to be specified, any additional conference servicing requirements for related activities, such as parallel meetings of the General Assembly, round tables, hearings and panels, will be evaluated and submitted to the Assembly at a later stage, once the format and modalities of the high-level dialogue have been determined.

Secondly, the results of the Secretary-General's efforts to designate a focal unit within the Secretariat to handle these matters will be addressed in his report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the draft resolution under consideration, as called for under paragraph 17 of the text.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/61/L.11/Rev.2, as orally revised. The Assembly will take action on draft resolution A/61/L.11/Rev.2, entitled "Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace", as orally revised. I should like to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: China, Eritrea and Lebanon. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.11/Rev.2, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/61/L.11/Rev.2, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 61/221).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Jokinen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Turkey and Croatia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Serbia and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, align themselves with this declaration.

Tolerance is one of the core values of the European Union, as reflected in the motto "United in diversity" and in our laws and policies. It is our firm belief that tolerance and the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms are key to relieving sensitivities and finding durable solutions to the tensions that sometimes surge in that regard. The European Union sees dialogue as an essential tool for laying firm foundations for mutual understanding and tolerance across religious and cultural lines.

The European Union highly appreciates the intensive consultations that took place this year between us and the main sponsors of this resolution. The active exchange of views helped to bring about some, although not all, of the desired improvements in the wording of the resolution, thus strengthening its consensual basis. Owing to our genuine commitment to the underlying tenet of this resolution, the European Union joined the consensus on its adoption. We would, however, like to take this opportunity to underline the main principles that guide our understanding of the resolution.

It is the European Union's firm belief that the protection and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms are central to our efforts to strengthen interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and that genuine mutual understanding can be built only on full respect for individual dignity and integrity.

The European Union wishes to emphasize once again the paramount importance of the freedom of expression in the conduct of such dialogue. We are deeply convinced that a fruitful and genuine dialogue cannot be guided by Government authorities; it needs to be rooted in free and spontaneous participation in public debate reflecting a variety of opinions. In that regard, we are pleased to note that operative paragraph 12 of this resolution is fully in line with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The European Union attaches great importance to the various United Nations initiatives aimed at enhancing dialogue and mutual understanding. Moreover, we would like to pay special tribute to the work conducted within the framework of the initiative for an Alliance of Civilizations. Just a couple of days ago, we heard the Secretary-General give his broad support to the implementation of the recommendations laid down in the report of the High-level Group. It is our understanding that, in order to most effectively move forward the agenda of dialogue and tolerance,

these initiatives should be carried out in a coordinated, coherent and complementary manner, and with appropriate follow-up.

In line with that approach, we therefore welcome the aim of coordinated and coherent follow-up within the United Nations system, as outlined in paragraph 16 of the resolution. However, when it comes to the concrete organization of the work of the United Nations Secretariat, the European Union fully trusts the Secretary-General to propose the most appropriate ways and means to that end, within the existing institutional framework.

In the same spirit, we welcome the decision, reflected in paragraph 14 of the resolution, to closely coordinate the planned high-level dialogue with other comparable initiatives so as to ensure due visibility and centrality of the debate. Also, the need for an international year for interreligious and intercultural dialogue needs to be carefully assessed against the background of other ongoing initiatives, such as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World and the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations, and with due regard for the guidelines for establishing international years.

It is with that understanding that the European Union joined the consensus on this resolution.

Mr. Miller (United States of America): The United States was founded on the principle of freedom of religion. Our pluralism of religions and a strong tradition of open dialogue have promoted tolerance and the growth and vitality of our society for over 400 years.

The text just adopted has much to recommend it. It acknowledges the importance of religious and cultural diversity and affirms that mutual understanding and dialogue are important for achieving a true and lasting peace. It recognizes the importance of education, and it recognizes the vital role of the media, whose ability to work freely and objectively is crucial to open and honest dialogue, even when the news that they report is unpleasant or critical.

We appreciate the sponsors' agreement to modify operative paragraph 12 to reflect exactly the language in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We are still disappointed, however, that the resolution highlights limitations on freedom of expression. We believe that in a resolution on interreligious dialogue and in a paragraph on the media, highlighting restrictions on speech creates a potentially chilling effect. We are greatly troubled by the potential for arbitrary, Government-imposed restrictions in these areas, where tolerance and diversity are vitally important.

Our joining the consensus on this resolution as regards paragraph 12 is predicated upon the declaration made by the United States on article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and upon United States constitutional provisions concerning freedom of expression. We do not wish to fetter freedom of expression, particularly in the context of interreligious and intercultural dialogue; such dialogue can be effective only when it is completely open and free. We must be able to engage in an open exchange of views without fear of recrimination if we are to truly develop the understanding and trust necessary to get along and live with one another.

Regarding paragraph 14, we understand that the provisions called for will not give rise to additional financial implications. We wish to note that the United States delegation also generally opposes any intersessional departures that would add to or alter the calendar of conferences and meetings or that would give rise to additional financial implications.

Ms. Giménez-Jiménez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has always played a leading role in promoting the values of freedom, peace, solidarity, well-being and social coexistence. Today, we welcome the consensus adoption of resolution 61/221, which further commits us to the promotion of peace, dialogue, understanding and cooperation between religions. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), which is referred to in the fourth preambular paragraph, does not constitute a mandate for my country.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 44.

Agenda item 71 (*continued*)

Oceans and the law of the sea

(a) Oceans and the law of the sea

Draft resolution (A/61/L.30)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on this item at its 68th, 69th and 71st plenary meetings, on 7 and 8 December 2006. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/61/L.30 is contained in document A/61/624.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.30, entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of draft resolution A/61/L.30, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Belgium, Belize, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Madagascar, Micronesia, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine and Vanuatu. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Turkey.

Abstaining:

Colombia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Draft resolution A/61/L.30 was adopted by 157 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions (resolution 61/222).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Cameroon and the Lao People's Democratic Republic advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour]

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Erciyes (Turkey): Turkey voted against resolution 61/222, which is entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea" and which was submitted under sub-item (a) of agenda item 71. My delegation would like to underline that the reasons that prevented Turkey from becoming a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea remain valid. Turkey supports international efforts to establish a regime of the sea that is based on the principle of equity and that can be acceptable to all States. However, in our opinion, the Convention does not make adequate provision for special geographic situations. As a consequence, it is not able to establish an acceptable balance between conflicting interests. Furthermore, the

Convention makes no provision for registering reservations on specific clauses.

Although Turkey agrees with the Convention in its general intent, and agrees with most of its provisions, it is unable to become a party to it because of those serious shortcomings. That being the case, Turkey could not support the resolution, which also calls upon States to become parties to the Convention and to harmonize their national legislation with its provisions.

Mr. Palavicini-Guédez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to refer to resolution 61/222, which was introduced under sub-item (a) of agenda item 71, entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea" and which has just been adopted by Assembly.

In that regard, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would like to reiterate its commitment to cooperate with efforts aimed at promoting coordination on issues pertaining to oceans and the law of the sea, in keeping with international law but without reference to any particular convention.

In this connection, we would like to repeat what we said during the informal consultative process that took place in February 2006 and during the recently concluded informal consultations: the reasons that prevented Venezuela from becoming a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea remain valid. It is for that reason that my delegation was not in a position to join other States in support of the resolution as a whole, as Venezuela is not a party to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Nor are we bound by the provisions of the Convention under customary international law, with the exception of those provisions that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has, or will have, explicitly recognized by incorporating them into our national legislation.

My delegation would therefore like to reiterate its long-standing position with regard to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as some of the provisions of today's resolution led my delegation to abstain in the voting. Nevertheless, my delegation would like to note that Venezuela supports section X of the resolution, which pertains to marine biodiversity, as it allows States not parties to the Convention to participate in the discussions to be held by the United Nations with regard to marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdictions. Venezuela believes the Convention on Biological Diversity to be a framework instrument for the regulation, conservation and use of biological diversity on all fronts.

In that regard, we would like once again to thank delegations for their understanding during the informal consultations, as well as to reiterate our thanks for their support. We believe that it is through negotiation and understanding that consensus can be achieved, and that universality is achieved by marshalling will. Section X of the resolution just adopted by the Assembly is an example of that.

Ms. Nworgu (Nigeria): As a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Nigeria believes that the international community has been well served by the provisions of the Convention, including those governing the rights of passage of vessels on the high seas and straits, consistent with international law. That has ensured navigational safety without compromising environmental concerns over pollution.

Nigeria is satisfied that the occasional disputes that have arisen between States parties on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea have been immediately resolved within the ambit of international law. Nigeria recalls that, during the last meeting of the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the International Maritime Organization, held last October in London, the principle of the right of passage was again reaffirmed by the majority of participants, including Nigeria. The fact is that, unless that principle is affirmed and protected, the freedom of movement of vessels, and especially transit passage, would be set back. Nigeria does not therefore subscribe to interpretations of the Convention that are inconsistent with its spirit and letter. Nigeria therefore reiterates its support for paragraphs 65 to 67 of resolution we have just adopted, and rejects unilateral measures, howsoever conceived by States, that run counter to the letter and spirit of article 42 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and thereby jeopardize the multilateral cooperation envisaged in the Convention.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 71?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 108 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking countries

Draft resolution (A/61/L.43)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Draft resolution (A/61/L.49)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 108 and its sub-items (a) to (t) at its 38th and 39th plenary meetings, on 20 October 2006.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.43.

Mr. Tarragô (Brazil): On behalf of the member States of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) — Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste — I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.43, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-peaking Countries", under sub-item (f) of agenda item 108. I would also like to mention that the following countries have joined as co-sponsors of the draft resolution: Argentina, Chile, the Czech Republic, the Gambia, Mauritius, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian and Zambia.

The CPLP brings together 240 million people in eight countries and four continents. Its members are active participants in various forums of the United Nations. The CPLP also includes members of important groupings or organizations, such as the African Union, the Common Market of the South, the European Union, the Organization of American States, the Southern African Development Community and the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

One of the objectives of the Community is to expand cooperation among its members by means of concerted political and diplomatic actions, including in the context of international organizations, so as to give ever greater expression to their common interests and needs. Another important goal that we actively pursue is the intensification of bilateral and plurilateral cooperation among member States, especially in areas such as health, education, agriculture, public administration and technology.

As a dynamic organization, the CPLP has been involved in many initiatives since its establishment — such as fighting HIV/AIDS in its five African member States; the organization of the conference on malaria that took place in Sao Tome and Principe; the establishment at Luanda, Angola, of a centre for the development of entrepreneurial skills; the establishment in Maputo, Mozambique, of a centre for the development of public administration; and the establishment of a centre of official languages in Timor-Leste to consolidate the use of Portuguese and Tetum.

On the political front, the CPLP has been actively involved in Guinea-Bissau to help in the electoral process. It has also been in contact with international financial institutions in order to obtain funding for an emergency project in support of institutional rebuilding in that country. In Timor-Leste the CPLP is involved in rebuilding the country's justice and public administration systems.

The draft resolution I have the honour to introduce today on behalf of the CPLP members stresses the progress achieved in the area of cooperation between the CPLP and United Nations agencies and other bodies and programmes, in particular UNESCO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the International Labour Organization. That cooperation has been helpful in the implementation of programmes and in developing partnerships with projects aimed at fighting hunger and poverty, as well as HIV/AIDS, in CPLP countries. That action demonstrates the engagement of the CPLP in multilateral initiatives of the United Nations in the context of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

Both individually and collectively, members of the CPLP are committed to the promotion and

protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as set out in the CPLP's Constitutive Declaration and Statutes. In that context, on 9 November 2006, we signed with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights an agreement regarding consultation, exchange of information and technical cooperation on activities in the field of human rights. Draft resolution A/61/L.43 has as its main feature, in the operative part, an invitation to the Secretary-General to continue to undertake consultations with the Executive Secretary of the Community, with a view to promoting cooperation between the two secretariats, as well as to start consultations for the establishment of a formal cooperation agreement.

Members of CPLP would greatly appreciate it if the draft resolution could be considered with the following three corrections.

The fourth preambular paragraph should read as follows:

> "Welcoming the participation of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in the Seventh High-level Meeting between the United Nations and Regional and Other Intergovernmental Organizations, held in New York on 22 September 2006,".

The fifth preambular paragraph should read as follows:

> "Recalling the celebration by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the first time of the Portuguese Language Day on 5 May 2006,".

The third correction is to operative paragraph 2, which should read as follows:

> "Welcomes the signature on 9 November 2006 of the agreement between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries regarding consultation, exchange of information and technical cooperation on their respective activities in the field of human rights;".

On behalf of the States members of the CPLP, I wish to express our gratitude to those countries that joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which we hope can meet with the approval of the General Assembly.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.49.

Mr. Majoor (Netherlands): It is my honour and pleasure to introduce to the General Assembly draft resolution A/61/L.49, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). I hope that the draft resolution will shortly be adopted by consensus.

The primary objective of the biennial draft resolutions on this item is to highlight the importance of continued cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, an organization that is coming closer and closer to matching the universality of the United Nations, with a current membership of 180 countries. The task of completing its full universalization still requires special efforts by all stakeholders. The adoption of this draft resolution will provide the basis for the General Assembly's continued consideration of cooperation between the United Nations and the OPCW at its sixty-third session.

There can be no doubt that one of the key objectives of the United Nations, namely, a safer world for all, is greatly enhanced by the OPCW's activities in the areas of non-proliferation, protection and assistance to member States in the destruction of chemical stockpiles, as well as international cooperation in the peaceful uses of chemistry. The OPCW's activities, which are often undertaken in cooperation with regional organizations, remain as valid today as when the organization was established 10 years ago, including those aimed at addressing new threats such as international terrorism, on which the General Assembly has recently adopted an important Strategy (resolution 60/288).

It is against that background that the Netherlands, as initiator of this draft resolution and at the request of the OPCW, has included a reference to the upcoming celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. That important event will be celebrated in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 9 May 2007, with the unveiling by Her Majesty the Queen of the Netherlands of a permanent memorial to all victims of chemical weapons. It goes without saying that the OPCW is

aiming for appropriate political representation as a strong message of member-State support for the OPCW's mission to finally free the world from the dangers of chemical weapons through the total elimination of these cruel instruments of death.

Let me close by warmly thanking all Member States, including those that have sponsored this draft resolution. Their support is most valuable and highly appreciated. It is a pleasure to see that, as with the membership of the OPCW, the number of sponsors has also continued to grow, as we now have over 70 sponsors today, compared to 50 last year.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/61/L.43 and A/61/L.49.

We turn first to draft resolution A/61/L.43, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries", as orally corrected. I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/61/L.43: Argentina, Chile, the Czech Republic, the Gambia, Mauritius, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Zambia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.43, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/61/L.43, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 61/223).

The President: Draft resolution A/61/L.49 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/61/L.49: Andorra, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Moldova, San Marino, Senegal, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uruguay and Uzbekistan.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.49?

Draft resolution A/61/L.49 was adopted (resolution 61/224).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (f) and (n) of agenda item 108?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/61/L.39/Rev.1)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.39/Rev.1.

Ms. Lazouras (South Africa): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the draft resolution entitled "World Diabetes Day", which is contained in document A/61/L.39/Rev.1.

Diabetes is a silent epidemic that has immense human, social and economic costs. It spares no nation, and the threat it is beginning to pose to development is growing. More than 240 million people around the world now live with diabetes, which kills over 3.5 million people each year. An additional 7 million are falling victim every year. Furthermore, diabetes entails innumerable related diseases and conditions.

Despite the growing numbers and the threat to life and well-being, its full dimension and impact remain unrecognized, in particular in low- and middle-income countries. The World Health Organization projects that, without remedial action, diabetes deaths will increase by more than 50 per cent over the next 10 year. Most notable, diabetes deaths are predicted to increase by over 80 per cent in upper-middle-income countries between 2006 and 2015.

We are of the view that a General Assembly resolution on diabetes would strengthen awareness and facilitate immediate global action in addressing this pandemic. In that regard, by draft resolution A/61/L.39/Rev.1 the Assembly would decide that the current World Diabetes Day — 14 November — be designated as United Nations World Diabetes Day, to be observed every year beginning in 2007. The draft resolution encourages Member States to establish national policies focusing on the prevention, treatment and care of diabetes, in line with their health-care systems. Furthermore, Member States as well as other stakeholders are invited to observe the Day in an appropriate manner, in order to raise public awareness on diabetes and related complications, including through education and the mass media.

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Diabetes is incurable, but its management is within human reach. With good awareness, discipline and moderation in diet and lifestyle, affected people can lead normal lives. A United Nations Day will significantly contribute to awareness-building and draw the attention of the international community to the need for effective measures for the management, treatment and care of diabetes. We hope that this draft resolution will be adopted by consensus. We would also like to thank all the countries that sponsored the draft resolution.

Before we take action on the draft resolution, I would like to make one correction to the first preambular paragraph. The words "resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006" should be replaced by the words "resolution 60/35 of 30 November 2005".

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.39/Rev.1, entitled "World Diabetes Day", as orally corrected. I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/61/L.39/Rev.1: Austria, Georgia, Malta, Portugal and Ukraine.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.39/Rev.1, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/61/L.39/Rev.1, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 61/225).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): The Bangladesh delegation most warmly thanks all those who joined in the unanimous adoption of resolution 61/225. That adoption attests to the fact that the entirety of the membership can be united in combating any threat or possible threat to humankind. That is in consonance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter enjoins us to cooperate for the betterment of humanity in the social, cultural and economic spheres.

A united front against diabetes is an example of that. We have now joined the cause to fight it. It is a quiet cause, for diabetes is a quiet killer. Statistics demonstrate that 246 million people around the world are now victims. It is emerging as a major public health challenge of the twenty-first century. Least developed countries, of which my country is one, do not have the wherewithal to confront this burgeoning menace. Indeed, unless we are able to alleviate poverty and reduce the incidence of debilitating diseases like diabetes, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals will remain for most of us a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Bangladesh views the United Nations as a tool for change and an instrument to help create a global community where peace and stability may reign, where conditions are appropriate for development, where the environment is protected and where poverty and disease are drastically reduced. We will not achieve the changes we seek tomorrow, or the day after, but eventually. We must continue to work towards them with dedication, diligence and patience. That is why Bangladesh champions causes at the United Nations — not lost causes but noble ones — and, often, as in this case, quiet ones.

We fervently believe that this resolution is a milestone achievement. It is now our shared responsibility to pursue multilateral efforts to raise public awareness about diabetes and related complications, as well as to ensure prevention, treatment and care. We can fail to do so only at the cost of great peril to the humankind.

Let me conclude by wishing all members the very best for the holidays: *Eid mubarak*, merry Christmas and happy Hanukkah.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 113.

Programme of work

The President: I would like to draw the attention of members to the date of recess of the current session. Members will recall that, at its 72nd plenary meeting, held on 11 December 2006, the General Assembly decided that the sixty-first session would recess on Thursday, 21 December. However, in view of the work that remains to be done for this part of the session, I would like to propose to the Assembly that it postpone the date of recess of the current session to Friday, 22 December. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to that proposal.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.